

These Mysterious People



Dr. Nandor Fodor



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Introduction

- Nandor Fodor -

THE TWENTY-FIVE articles published in this book were originally written for Northcliffe Newspapers, Ltd. They first appeared in the "Bristol Evening World" in April and May, 1934. Their claim on the interest of the book-reading public lies in the fact that they fill a gap. Although Psychical Research and Spiritualism has a vast literature no single book has yet presented, in the form of short narratives, the stories of famous mediums of the past and present. I wish to stress that these narratives were written for the general public. It was my purpose to show that there are true stories which vie in fascination with the most popular thrillers. Also that it is time enough to know of the existence of such mysteries and the attempts at their unveiling by men of science.

My quotations are strictly accurate. Those desiring general and specific information on the subjects involved should consult my "Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science" in which, under alphabetical headings, they will find summaries of all the experimental findings of Psychical Research and its history.

Nandor Fodor, L.L.D.
London, September 1st.

Chapter 1: Riding the Air

- Nandor Fodor -

THE IMPOSSIBLE of yesterday is the accepted fact of today.

Scientific progress has done that. It has swept away our natural resistance to novel discoveries.

We have become used to the fantastic. Recent experience has taught us to call no thing impossible in the realm of physical science.

We all believe in miracles - when they are material miracles: the discoveries and achievements of scientists.

But as soon as it comes to psychological findings, to the discoveries of the mind, to the latent powers of the human soul, we are on our guard at once in fact, most of us are frankly sceptical.

A strange paradox. For whereas our scientific age hardly has a past of a hundred years, the powers of the soul were with us in Biblical days and have left a trail of light down the corridors of time.

Will there be a science of the soul? A momentous question.

If there is but a germ of truth in all the wonders ascribed to mysterious psychic faculties, we are on the threshold of a new world.

And it seems as if orthodox science were about to admit the existence of a vast uncharted sea, though it instantly recoils from the formidable claims it is asked to face.

The Miracle of the Abyss

Think of the staggering demand which Dr. Cannon's turbulent book, *The Invisible Influence*, makes on your imagination.

The learned doctor has barely escaped suspension from the Colney Hatch Mental Home of the London County Council because of this amazing record of his experiences in Tibet.

He acquaints us with a new form of locomotion: *levitation over an unbridged abyss*, a gulf fifty feet wide with a roaring river at the bottom 300 feet below.

We read of a mysterious Knight Commander in glowing scarlet robes. He stands on the other side of the chasm and gives instructions as to how they should cross the gulf by levitation.

"Within the course of a few hours," says Dr. Cannon, "we had made our bodily state fit to allow of this great miraculous transportation phenomenon taking place by pure mental effort; and in another moment of time we were both landed safely on the other side."

Dr. Cannon's account of weird experiences received unexpected support from Sir Ernest Wallis Budge, the great Egyptologist. He stated in a newspaper interview(1):

"I knew an African and an Indian who could vanish into air as you spoke to them, touched them... It was no question of hypnotism, for I walked through the spot where they had been standing.

(1) "Daily Express", Jan. 17, 1934.

In the same way they would reappear, and, as they solidified, push me away."

Without a risk to sanity, can we be expected to believe in such miracles?

We can only answer with other questions.

Have such claims ever been put forward in the West? Who were the witnesses? What were the conditions?

For if a satisfactory answer were found to each of those queries we would be wise to reserve judgment - at least for the time.

At the Third International Congress of Psychical Research in Paris in 1927, Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, a noted German scientist, described the case of a young man who, by breathing exercises, levitated his own body twenty-seven times.

The young man was a student of Yoga, a Hindu school of psychic training.

Breathing exercises appear to have a curious effect on the weight of the human body. They form part of the Yoga curriculum.

The Western inquirer, however, will demand more in the way of proof. A dip into psychic literature provides sufficient food for thought.

Man in the Air

In 1886, in the St. Germain Cemetery in Paris, they laid to rest a Scotsman who was one of the most remarkable men of the last century. His name was Daniel Dunglas Home.

His father was said to be a natural son of an earl. If the story is true the flighty earl was not a patch on his grandson. For, according to no less distinguished a witness than Sir William Crookes, "there are at least a hundred instances of Mr. Home's rising from the ground, in the presence of as many separate persons; and I have heard from the lips of three witnesses to the most striking occurrence of this kind - the Earl of Dunraven, Lord Lindsay and Captain C. Wynne - their most intimate accounts of what took place.

"To reject the recorded testimony on this subject is to reject all human testimony whatever, for no fact, in sacred or profane history, is supported by a stronger array of proof."

The astonishing occurrence took place on December 13th, 1868, at Ashley House, Victoria Street, London. In a state of trance Home floated out of a third-story window and came in through the window of another room.

The three witnesses heard Home go into the next room, heard the window thrown up, and presently Home appeared standing upright outside their own window. He opened the window and walked in quite coolly.

Lord Adare, later Lord Dunraven, went into the other room to shut the window, and found that it was not raised a foot. He could not think how Home managed to squeeze through.

Home told him, "Come and see."

"I went with him," Lord Adare writes. "He told me to open the window as it was before. I did so. He told me to stand a little distance off.

"He then went through the open space head first, quite rapidly, his body being nearly horizontal and apparently rigid.

"He came in again, feet foremost, and we returned to the other room.

"It was so dark I could not see clearly how he was supported outside.

"He did not appear to grasp or rest upon the balustrade, but rather to be swung out and in."

A truly remarkable incident, well worthy of the violent controversy which arose over it in later years.

To Lord Lindsay we owe two accounts. One in 1869, another in 1871.

In the latter he speaks of the moon shining into the room. This was a serious discrepancy, as a nautical almanack disclosed a new moon on the date in question. The moon, therefore, could not have lighted the room.

But Lord Adare's almost 'contemporary account and Lord Lindsay's first version do not mention the moon. Which was correct?

Dr. W. B. Carpenter, vice-president of the Royal Society, intimated that Captain Wynne never testified to having seen Home float out of the room. He must have been discomfited by Captain Wynne's answer to a letter to Home:

"The fact of your having gone out of the window and in at the other I can swear to."

Other writers attacked the testimonies on the grounds of poor visibility. But Andrew Lang was to the point in remarking that people in a room can see even in a fog a man coming in by the window, and go out again, head first, with body rigid.

The account of this levitation is too remarkable and too well attested to be treated lightly. It essentially differs from Dr. Cannon's feat, as Home had no conscious recollection of what had taken place.

We find this the case in nearly all mediumistic levitations and in all cases of aerial journeys.

The Vanishing Marquise

Nor are such extraordinary records a matter of past history. There is a recent case, perhaps the best authenticated of all.

The scene was the medieval Millesimo Castle in Italy; its unwilling hero the Marquise Centurione Scotto, an ex-M.P. and scion of the oldest Italian nobility with the title of Principe del Sacro Romano Impero.

In 1926 he lost a son in an aeroplane accident. Grief-stricken, he strove to find comfort in Spiritualism. He found himself the possessor of remarkable powers.

On July 29th, 1928, in the course of a sitting, the Marquise, who was the medium, exclaimed, in a frightened voice:

"I can no longer feel my legs!"

The gramophone was stopped. An interval of death-like silence followed.

The medium was addressed, without answer; then felt for. His place was empty.

They turned on the red light. The door was still securely locked with the key on the inside, but the medium had disappeared.

All the rooms of the castle were searched without result.

Two and a half hours later it occurred to the anxious sitters to ask for information through automatic writing. Mrs. Gwendolyn Kelley Hack, an American authoress, made the attempt. Her hand wrote:

"Do not be anxious, we are watching and guarding... The medium is asleep."

But the members of the circle, among them Ernesto Bozzano, the doyen of Italian psychical researchers, were not to be calmed. Finally precise information came through:

"Go to the right. Then outside wall and gate. He is lying. Hay, hay. On soft place."

The place indicated a granary in the stable yard. The great entrance door was locked; the key was not in

the lock.

They ran back to fetch it, and entering, found a small door which had been previously overlooked. This door was also locked, the key being in the keyhole on the outside.

They opened it with the greatest caution. On a heap of hay and oats the medium was comfortably lying immersed in a profound sleep.

When he first regained consciousness and found himself in the stable he feared that he had gone out of his mind and burst into tears.

The Two Pansini Boys

The case of the Pansini boys, into which Dr. Joseph Lapponi, medical officer to Popes Leo XVII and Pius X, made a special investigation, is, in a sense, unique.

It concerns Alfred and Paul, ten and eight years old respectively, sons of a building contractor of Ruvo, Apulia.

The old house in which they lived was the scene of strange visitations. There were poltergeist phenomena: throwing and breaking of crockery by invisible hands.

The elder boy, then only seven years of age, fell into trance and spoke and recited in French, Latin and Greek.

He was sent off to a seminary and the phenomena ceased.

On his return in 1904 the terror broke out anew.

In the space of half an hour, by some unknown power, both he and his brother were transported from Ruvo to Molfetta, a distance of nine miles.

Another time they found themselves at sea in a boat, having no idea how they got there.

Once they disappeared from the square of Ruvo to discover themselves, ten minutes later, before their uncle's house in Trani, a good distance away.

The children hugely enjoyed these mysterious trips. But their parents were badly frightened.

They sent for the Bishop of Bitonto. While the mother was voicing her fears of the Devil to the holy man, both boys vanished from the room.

For one moment they were there. The next moment they were gone without a trace. The windows and doors were locked, a precaution which the mother had taken. There was no way out from the room - except for a mouse.

No light was ever thrown on that mystery. Italian scientists talked of "ambulatory automatism"; moving in a secondary state and forgetting it when regaining consciousness.

But what about the locked room?

And how could two boys run nine miles in half an hour without anyone perceiving them on the road?

A Giantess Who Was Spirited Away

An extraordinary instance of transportation took place in London on June 3rd, 1871. It happened to Mrs. Samuel Guppy, a famous medium of the day, with whom Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace, co-discoverer with Darwin of the principle of natural selection, had sittings for years.

From her home in Highbury, by some invisible power, she was whisked away to the house of Charles

Williams, another medium, at 61, Lamb's Conduit Street, a distance of over three miles.

She dropped down like a log on the top of a table around which, closely packed, ten people were sitting in a séance.

They were having an amiable chat with "Katie King", the famous spirit guide with whom Sir William Crookes was to have been photographed arm-in-arm.

Someone asked "Katie King" to bring something. Another sitter jokingly observed:

"I wish you would bring Mrs. Guppy."

A third sitter protested:

"Good gracious, I hope not. She is one of the biggest women in London!"

"Katie King's" voice cried aloud in the dark:

"I will, I will, I will."

Three minutes had hardly passed when someone cried out:

"Good God, there is something on my head."

There was a heavy thud. One or two screams. A match was struck.

There was Mrs. Guppy on the table.

She was perfectly motionless, in a state of trance.

She was arrayed in a loose dressing-gown, in a more or less *decollete* condition, with bedroom slippers on her feet.

One arm was rigidly held over her eyes, the other hung by her side, holding a pen wet with ink.

Great fears were entertained for her health. But she recovered consciousness, shook off the effect of the shock and joined the sitting.

From the ceiling her boots, hat and clothes dropped down piece by piece, also a lot of flowers.

The flowers were her own psychic contribution. She could produce heaps of flowers out of the void - even full-sized sunflowers with fresh earth clotted around the roots.

Inquiries at Mrs. Guppy's home revealed that at the time of her transportation she was writing in her room. Her companion was sitting near the fire, making up accounts.

Suddenly, looking up, she found that Mrs. Guppy had disappeared. She fancied seeing a slight haze near the ceiling. That was all.

The case was the occasion of much drollery in the London press. *But nothing was brought forward to shake or disprove the written testimony of ten witnesses, most of them well-known people with a reputation and social standing.*

Chapter 2: Competing with the Cheshire Cat Story of Madame Elizabeth d'Esperance

- Nandor Fodor -

THE CHESHIRE Cat kept on appearing and vanishing so suddenly that it made Alice quite giddy. Then "it vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail and ending with the grin, which remained after the rest of it had gone".

To tell the story of a woman who all but rivalled that achievement and to speak of people who believe in it, is to invite the answer of the Cat:

"We're all mad here. I am mad. You are mad."

You will most probably call this a mad story.

Would it help to say that it was vouched for by fifteen eminent witnesses, among them professors at Swedish Universities, that their testimony was collected by Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor to the Czar of Russia, and that it was published, as a contribution to science, under the title *A Case of Partial Dematerialization*, in 1898?

It happened in Helsingfors on December 11th, 1895, during a séance given by one Madame d'Esperance.

The sitters actually saw the medium's body, *from the waist downwards*, disappear. Her skirt lay flat on the chair, and her trunk appeared to be suspended in the air above the seat.

This astonishing state of affairs continued for about fifteen minutes.

The light was sufficient to see by, and Madame d'Esperance was quite conscious throughout the proceedings.

She permitted five persons to verify the phenomenon by passing their hands below all that was left of her.

How did Madame d'Esperance feel about it

Here are her own words, quoted from *Shadowland*, her autobiography:

"I relaxed my muscles and let my hand fall upon my lap, and then I found that, instead of resting against my knees, they rested against the chair in which I was sitting.

"This discovery disturbed me greatly, and I wondered if I were dreaming.

"I patted my skirt carefully, all over, trying to locate my limbs and the lower part of my body, but found that although the upper part of it - arms, shoulders, chest, etc. - was in its natural state, all the lower part had entirely disappeared.

"I put my hand where my knees should have been, but nothing whatever was there but my dress and skirt.

"Nevertheless, I felt just as usual - better than usual, in fact; so that if my attention had not been attracted by accident I should probably have known nothing of the occurrence.

"Leaning forward to see if my feet were in their proper place, I almost lost my balance. This



A seven feet high Golden Lily which Yolande mysteriously produced from the air at a séance with Madame d'Esperance, who stands beside it.

frightened me very much, and I felt that it was absolutely necessary to assure myself whether I was dreaming or the victim of hallucination.

"To this end, I reached over and took Professor Seiling's hand, asking him to tell me if I was really seated in the chair.

"I waited his answer in a perfect agony of suspense. I felt his hand just as if it touched my knees, but he said, 'There is nothing there, nothing but your skirt.'

"This gave me a still greater fright. I pressed my free hand against my breast and felt my heart beating wildly."

The phenomenon; the miracle, if you like: or perhaps you would say the trick - lasted for fifteen minutes.

Then her skirts filled out and her lower limbs appeared in full view of the sitters.

Madame d'Esperance endured deep distress during that experience. She was ill for three months afterwards.

Who was she, this woman of mystery?

D'Esperance is French for Hope. She was Elizabeth Hope; by marriage Mrs. Reed, of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

She died fifteen years ago after living most of her life abroad.

She won an honoured place both in the annals of psychical research and in the esteem and friendship of many great scientists of her age.

She was "queer" from childhood. Saw "shadow people" where there was but a blank space. Later, in the dark, she could see a luminous cloud assuming human shapes. She took a pencil and sketched a form which nobody else had seen. There came a strange discovery.

The sketches were recognised as portraits of the dead.

A period of great excitement followed. Madame d'Esperance studied for a few months to improve her natural sketching talent. But as she progressed her power to see waned. Every attempt was followed by a violent headache.

T. P. Barkas, an alderman of Newcastle, initiated a scientific investigation of her strange powers. As a lecturer on popular science he became deeply interested in this girl of limited education who, through automatic writing, set out to prove that all his science was wrong.

A definite personality appeared to be behind these scripts. It claimed to be one Humnur Stafford, a long-dead philosopher.

For one who was long dead he was very up to date. Very minutely he described an instrument which, according to Alderman Barkas, later proved to be the telephone, and also another by which messages would be forwarded to a great distance in the original handwriting.

The remarkable re-education of Alderman Barkas paled into insignificance by subsequent happenings.

Sitting in a dark cabinet, Madame d'Esperance became conscious of a curious disturbance. The air seemed to be agitated as though a bird were fluttering about, and she felt as if fine threads were being drawn out of the pores of her skin.

The sitters in front of the cabinet grew excited. High above the curtain they saw a face with merry, laughing eyes, but - *without a body*.

Materialization. That mystery of mysteries... The apparent birth and flowering into full growth of human shapes from that peculiar bodily substance called ectoplasm. A biological miracle, which is now being

forced on the attention of science.

Witness Professor Charles Richet, the world famous physiologist of the Sorbonne, by no means a spiritualist, writing in his *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*:

"I shall not waste time in stating the absurdities, almost the impossibilities from the psycho-physiological point of view of this phenomenon. A living being, or living matter, formed under our eyes, which has its proper warmth, apparently a circulation of blood, and a physiological respiration, which has also a kind of psychic personality, having a will distinct from the will of the medium, in a word, a new human being. This is surely the climax of marvels. Nevertheless, it is a fact."

In the early years of Madame d'Esperance's amazing life few people dared to testify to such enormity.

It was so easy to picture a masquerading medium or an accomplice. So many took the bull by the horns. There was a rush, a scream, and a struggling spirit was found, not infrequently, to be the medium.

If that had been all, the problem of materialization would have been laid long ago.

But there is more in it than meets the eye.

Grim experiences have taught a terrible lesson that the phantoms are the flesh and blood of the medium even though distinct.

This is what happened, in Madame d'Esperance's own words, when Yolande, a young Arab phantom companion, was suddenly seized:

"All I knew was a horrible, excruciating sensation of being doubled up and squeezed together, as I can imagine a hollow gutta-percha doll would feel, if it had sensation, when violently embraced by its baby owner.

"A sense of terror and agonizing pain came over me, as though I were losing hold of life and were falling into some fearful abyss, yet knowing nothing, hearing nothing, except the echo of a scream I heard as at a distance.

"I felt I was sinking down, I knew not where.

"I tried to save myself, to grasp at something, but missed it; then came a blank from which I awakened with a shuddering horror - and sense of being bruised to death."

Was, then, Yolande found to be the medium?

Yes, she was.

Moreover, she was seized because she showed, at first, a bewildering resemblance to the medium.

Was, then, Madame d'Esperance a fraud?

The Spiritualist contention was, and with good reason, that the materialized phantom is part and parcel of the medium.

The Spiritualists also said, with less reason, that the grabbing acts as a paralysing shock; that it prevents the quick-disintegration of the phantom and its return, in the of ectoplasm, into the body of the medium; that, instead, the medium is violently precipitated into the phantom form.

A dangerous belief, with almost no justification. For it offers a safe conduct for rogues.

There is another defense which is far better transfiguration. That is the claim that *when "power" is slight the medium's face is being "built over" by the same ectoplasm that would, if ample, serve for a full form.*

Lovers of mystery should frown at both explanations. They spoil the glamour of the story.

For Madame d'Esperance vowed never to sit within the cabinet again, but to *exhibit herself and the phantoms at the same time*.

She kept faith. "Ghosts" trooped in and out. They worried sceptical scientists to death.

Madame d'Esperance grew old. But Yolande remained young and beautiful. Three times was she grabbed, and three times was the medium brought to the verge of death.

The last was the most harrowing ordeal. In Helsingfors in 1893 a sitter lost his reason. He assaulted the phantom girl. There were frightful consequences. The medium's hair turned white. For two years she was confined to bed.

In her biography Madame d'Esperance left us a stirring description of her psycho-physiological identity with her "ghosts". It reads:

"Now comes another figure, shorter, slenderer and with outstretched arms.

"Somebody rises up at the far end of the circle and comes forward. And the two are clasped in each other's arms. Then inarticulate cries of 'Anna, oh, Anna, my child, my loved one!'

"Then somebody else gets up and puts her arms round the figure. Then sobs, cries and blessings get mixed up.

"I feel my body swayed to and fro, and all gets dark before my eyes.

"I feel somebody's arms around me, although I sit on my chair alone.

"I feel somebody's heart beating against my breast. I feel that something is happening.

"No one is near me, except the two children.

"No one is taking any notice of me. All eyes and thoughts seem concentrated on the white slender figure standing there with the arms of the two black-robed women around it.

"It must be my own heart I feel beating so distinctly. Yet those arms around me? Surely, never did I feel a touch so plainly.

"I begin to wonder which is I? Am I the white figure or am I the one in the chair?

"Are they my hands around the old lady's neck or are these mine that are lying underneath of me, or underneath the figure if it be not I on the chair?

"Certainly, they are my lips that are being kissed. It is my face that is wet with the tears which these good women are shedding so plentifully.

"Yet, how can it be? It is a horrible feeling, thus losing hold of one's identity. I long to put one of these hands that are lying so helplessly and touch someone just to know if I am myself or only a dream if Anna be I and I am lost as it were in her identity?"

Thriller writers, have you ever conceived of a greater mystery?

Chapter 3: The Voice of Confucius

Story of George Valiantine

- Nandor Fodor -

COULD ANY Oriental scholar ever sanely dream of sitting at the feet of Confucius, listening to his words of wisdom, and hearing him chant archaic Chinese - a dead language of which only about twelve sounds are definitely known as pronounced 2,500 years ago, and with which only a handful of scholars in the world have acquaintance at all?

Yet this was precisely the adventure which befell Mr. Neville Whyment, a well-known scholar, in New York in October 1926 A.D.

Mr. Whyment, who is the master of more than languages, was invited by judge and Mrs. William Cannon to meet, on October 15th, 1926, in their apartment "some people interested in discussing psychical research" and kindly to help interpreting Oriental languages.

Not until they arrived did Mr. Whyment and his wife know that they had accepted an invitation to a spiritualist séance.

They had had no similar experience before and were but little impressed with the personality of George Valiantine, the famous direct-voice medium. "His speech," writes Mr Whyment in his *Psychic Adventures in New York* "was far from polished, he seemed to lack imagination ... he made amusing blunders in speech ... he was, in that company, a fish out of water."

The room which they were invited to examine appeared to be fool-proof and fake-proof. There was no appearance or suspicion of trickery.

They sat in the dark, said the Lord's Prayer, played gramophone records, until suddenly voices exploded in the air.

The first one, which proved of scholarly interest, "was roared at full lung force" in pure and clear Italian, and soon dropped into a Sicilian dialect of which Mr. Whyment knew nothing.

After some personal messages to the regular sitters, which made Mr. Whyment feel as an eavesdropper, there came a sound very difficult to describe. It was the sound of an old wheezy flute not too skilfully played.

"Those who have wandered through Chinese streets in the evening will readily recall the sound," he writes.

"In a few seconds it had carried me back to sights and experiences in the old Celestial Kingdom. In that indefinable fashion known only to those who have sat for some hours on end in pitch darkness waiting for something to happen, I sensed the eager thrill that ran through all the people there gathered as they heard this sound and waited for what was to follow.

"There was a rustling of silks as women straightened themselves in their chairs. There was the sharp intake of breath around the circle, and I noticed at the same moment the heavy, languorous breathing of Valiantine, whose position, directly facing me, I kept in the forefront of my mind.

"The flute-like sound faded, then stopped.

"The next sound seemed to be a hollow repetition of, a Chinese name - K'ung-fu-tzu - the name by which Confucius was canonized.

"I was not quite sure that I had heard aright, but I did recognize the sound for some variety of Chinese speech and so I asked, in Chinese, for another opportunity of hearing what had been

said before.

"This time, without any hesitation at all, came the name K'ung-fu-tzu.

"Now, I thought, was my opportunity. Chinese I had long regarded as my own special research area, and he would be a wise man, medium or other, who would attempt to trick me on such soil.

"If this tremulous voice were that of the old ethicist who had personally edited the Chinese Classics, then I had an abundance of questions to ask him."

As the voice went on Mr. Whymant kept calling for repetitions.

"Then it burst upon me," he says, "that I was listening to Chinese of a purity and delicacy not now spoken in any part of China ... The style ... was identical with that of the Chinese Classics, edited by Confucius 2,500 years ago.

"Only among the scholars of archaic Chinese could one now hear that accent and style, and then only when they intoned some passage from the ancient books."

The language being as dead colloquially as Sanskrit or Latin, Whymant determined to test the matter to the full limit.

He asked for details of Confucius' life and "style"; for particulars of his preoccupations on this earth, and set some posers of the type with which all students of Chinese have wrestled in their studies of the Confucian Canon.

"All my questions were answered at once, without any pose or fumbling; in fact, the answers came so swiftly upon the question that all too often I had to ask the voice to repeat its answer, as I had been unable to follow.

"The voice grew stronger with the passing of the moments, so that although the early part of the conversation was to some extent lost or doubtful, the succeeding phrases were quite clear so far as I was able to understand them."

He thought of a supreme test. Several poems in the *Shih King* - Classic of Poetry - have baffled the commentators ever since Confucius himself edited the work and left it to posterity as a model anthology of early Chinese verse.

Both Western and Chinese classical scholars have long ago given up trying to understand them.

So, using the flowery language of Chinese honorifics, he asked the Master:

"This stupid one would know the correct reading of a verse in the *Shih King*. It has been hidden from understanding for long centuries, and men look upon it with eyes that are blind. The passage begins thus: *Ts'ai ts'ai chuan erh* ...

"I could certainly not have repeated another line of this poem for I did not know any one of the remaining fifteen lines; but there was no need or even opportunity, for the voice took up the poem at once and recited it to the end.

"Read in this way,' the voice had said, 'does not its meaning become plain?'

"Surprised as I was, I did not intend to let matters rest there."

There is a difficult passage in the *Lun Yu*, or Analects of Confucius, which in the standard version of the book makes no sense at all. But Professor H. A. Giles, of Cambridge, gave it balanced sense by suggesting brilliant textual emendations. The voice had talked now for about ten minutes.

"Shall I ask of one passage in the Master's own writing P' queried Mr. Whymant. "In *Lun Yu*,

Hsia Pien, there is a passage which is wrongly written. Should it not read thus ... ?

"But before I could get even the details of the passage in question," writes Mr. Whymant, "the voice took up my sentence and carried it through to the end ... You were going to ask me about the two characters which end the last two phrases; you are quite right. The copyists were in error. The character which is written *se* should be *i*, and the character which is written *yen* is an error for *fou*.' Again the wind had been taken out of my sails."

Whymant had assisted at about a dozen sittings. He heard altogether fourteen foreign languages spoken. They included Chinese, Hindi, Persian, Basque, Sanskrit, Arabic, Portuguese, Italian, Yiddish, German and modern Greek.

He could not find a satisfactory normal explanation.

"Even if the medium had been a first-class linguist, it was manifestly impossible for him to be speaking in Chinese and American English at one and the same time, and yet all the sitters had heard Valiantine carrying on a conversation with his neighbour while other voices - two and three at one time - were speaking foreign languages fluently ...

"Voices seemed to come from the far corners of the room, out of the very wall against which the back of one's chair was pressed, from the ceiling, and from the floor."

The great Chinese Mystery did not end with Whymant's departure from New York. In 1927 Valiantine was tested, for the third time, in London.

Countess Ahlefeldt-Laurvig brought an ancient Chinese shell to a sitting in the apartment of Lord Charles Hope.

At the top of the shell circular folds ended in a small hollow mouthpiece.

In China such a shell is used as a horn and is blown on occasions as a "call".

The sitters tried it, but could produce no sound whatever. Yet at one period, during the sitting, from high up in the room, the shell horn was blown, and the peculiar notes were rendered in the correct Chinese fashion.

Moreover, on March 2nd, 1927, in Lord Charles Hope's apartment in London, by special arrangement with the Columbia Gramophone Company, the voice of Confucius was recorded. Its curious flute-like tones rose and fell and sometimes broke into a peculiar sing-song tone.

Mr. Whymant, on being invited to hear the record, could only interpret a few sentences because the voice was faint and became blurred in the recording. But he recognized a number of the peculiar intonations. He could gather the meaning of the recorded speech by the tonal values.

The voice was apparently identical with the one he heard in New York.

I do not envy the task of those who would explain this amazing tale by fraud. True, the honesty of the medium is always a central problem.

What, then, was George Valiantine's previous and later career?

He was a small manufacturer in Williamsport, New York, when, at the age of 43, his mediumship was accidentally discovered. In 1923 we find him, under the name of Mr. X, competing for the 2,500 dollars prize of *The Scientific American*, New York, for the production of genuine physical phenomena.

The committee heard voices from high in the air carry on prolonged conversation. But an electric control apparatus, secretly fixed to Valiantine's chair, failed to register his full weight for fourteen or fifteen seconds. So the evidence was ruled out.

In the following year remarkable things happened in England. In sittings with his wife, Mr. Dennis Bradley, the author, developed the direct voice himself. Valiantine came to visit them. During five weeks more than

fifty prominent people heard in Bradley's home over a hundred different spirit voices speak a medley of languages - even Cardiganshire Welsh, with Mr. Caradoc Evans, the Welsh novelist, being present.

A year later, again in England, Valiantine sat for the Society for Psychical Research.

The sittings were considered blank.

But in Bradley's house Dr. Woolley, their research officer, heard eleven distinct and individual voices for which he could not account.

And he was also satisfied that the movement of the luminous trumpet in the air was supernormal.

Shortly afterwards, even in daylight, he heard faint voices from inside Valiantine's trumpet. The medium was watched with hawk-like eyes. His lips never moved.

Such phenomena were too incredible to safeguard Valiantine from charges of fraud. Dennis Bradley always took up the cudgels on his behalf and cleared him of several lightly advanced accusations.

It was, therefore, a real sensation when, in 1931, Bradley himself washed his hands of this amazing man and made allegations of fraud.

But significantly, Valiantine was not accused on the count of the voices. Bradley desired to fingerprint the dead. Unknown to Valiantine, the plastic substance introduced into the seance room had been chemically prepared. An expert examination disclosed that the "supernormal" finger-prints obtained were made with Valiantine's toes and elbow and that his limbs were stained with the chemical.

That was bad enough. Worse, however, was that on the fatal night the spirits were also compromised. "Bert Everett," the dead brother-in-law of Valiantine, announced in his usual shrill tones from high in the air that Segrave was present and that an excellent imprint was made.

This part of the mystery was never cleared up. Bradley has no doubt that the voices were independent. Some of them he heard when Valiantine was not present. Was, then, "Bert Everett", the spirit, in league with Valiantine? The conclusion is difficult to escape.

And as it would be sheer lunacy to suppose that in the presence of experts such palpable fraud could be committed without detection, the incident must needs reflect on the combined incarnate and discarnate intelligence of the Valiantine family.

The exposure affected not the voices in the least. Shortly after, Surgeon-Admiral Nimmo had two sittings in daylight. The voices which he heard came distinctly from the trumpet and gave intelligent and evidential communications from dead people.

In the presence of a second doctor the voices were heard again distinctly and intelligently. The doctors kept Valiantine's face during the phenomena under acute observation. They discovered no movement whatever on it.

Where and how does the voice originate? That the physiology of the medium is implicated is apparent from the fact that the voices are only heard in his presence.

Of the meaning and extent of this implication ectoplasmic studies are furnishing information to psychical research which are little short of revolutionizing physiology and psychology alike.

Chapter 4: A Martian Revelation

Story of Mlle. Helene Smith

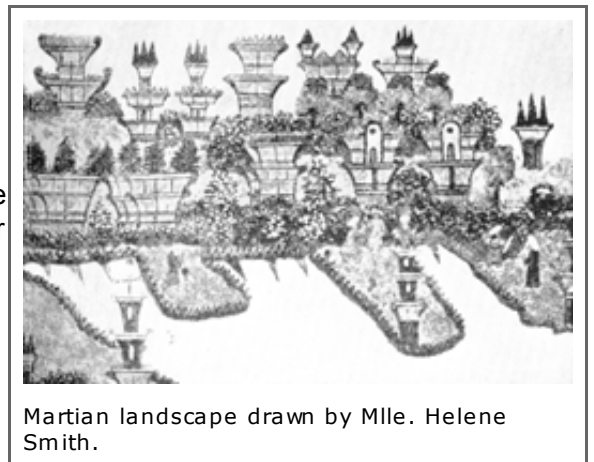
- Nandor Fodor -

SCHIAPARELL'S DISCOVERY of the mysterious channels of Mars made a deep impression on the subconscious mind of humanity in the last quarter of the past century. This was particularly noticeable on the Continent, where imagination was stimulated by Camille Flammarion's popular astronomical romances. They provided an escape from reality in wonder and awe. Earlier beliefs in other planets as abodes of life were speedily scrapped. The dreamers of the race whose outlook was cramped by the confines of our planet showed rapid adaptation to the change of fashion in the Heavens.

In the sixties the hand of Victorien Sardou, the great French dramatist, "dreamed", and drew, strange architectural designs of buildings on the planet Jupiter. But he no more believed in their real existence than Swift believed in Lilliput, Campanella in the City of the Sun, or Sir Thomas More in Utopia. His mantle fell on more intrepid souls. It fell on one lady in particular, whose flights of mind disclosed rare genius and promised a new revelation. Scientists fought bitterly over her Martian Dispensation. It was the psychologic sensation of the closing century.

It originated in a chance remark which August Lemaitre, a learned Swiss professor, dropped about the planet Mars in the presence of Mlle. Helene Smith, of Geneva. She was a "somnambuliste"; now we should call her a medium. A beautiful woman at the time (1894), "she evinced," wrote Prof. Theodore Flournoy(1), "nothing of the emaciated or tragic aspect which one habitually ascribes to the sybils of tradition. She presented an air of health, of physical and mental vigour, very pleasant to behold." Professors took to her like bees to honey, and they were to witness strange happenings. Her rambling speech poured forth knowledge and conveyed information which seemed to surpass the powers of the normal mind.

(1) "From India to the Planet Mars", London, 1901.



On November 25th, 18 94, in a state of trance, Mlle. Smith seemed to perceive, in the distance and at a great height, a bright light. Then she felt a tremor which almost caused her heart to cease beating, after which it seemed to her as though her head were empty and as if she were no longer in the body. She found herself in a dense fog, which changed successively from blue to a vivid rose colour, then to grey and finally to black. She said that she was floating. The table stood up on one leg, without anyone touching it, and its movement seemed to indicate that it was floating in a very curious manner. Then she saw a star growing larger, always larger, finally becoming as large as the house. She felt that she was ascending. The table commenced rapping the letters of the alphabet:

"Lemaitre, that which you have so long desired!"

The medium, who was ill, at ease, now found herself feeling better. She distinguished three enormous globes, one of them very beautiful "On what am I walking?" - she asked. The table replied: "On a world - Mars."

Helene Smith then began a description of all the strange things which presented themselves to her view, and caused her as much surprise as amusement. Carriages without horses or wheels emitted sparks as they glided by; houses were seen with fountains on the roof; a cradle having for curtain an angel made of iron with outstretched wings, etc. She described the people as exactly like the inhabitants of our earth, save that both sexes wore the same costume, consisting of trousers, very ample, and a long blouse, drawn tight about the waist and decorated with various designs.

The Martian world, in its chief characteristics, showed a complete identity with our world, and a puerile

originality in a host of minor details. Had this been all, the incident would have been speedily dismissed. But it was not. Helene Smith began to sketch the Martian landscapes and the things that were presented to her vision. The landscapes carried a suggestion of Japanese lacquer and Nankin dishes. Soon, the mystery deepened. She traced strange characters on paper, unlike any written on earth. They were revealed to be letters of the Martian alphabet. The professors sat up. Here was something promising. Their interest grew daily. With the passing of time Helene Smith actually began to talk Martian, and, by and by, furnished the translation of the sentences which the professors laboriously copied, as they were spoken or written automatically. The language bore the stamp of a natural language.

"I will add," said Prof. Flournoy, "that in speaking fluently and somewhat quickly, as Helene sometimes does in somnambulisme, it has an acoustic quality altogether its own, due to the predominance of certain sounds, and has a peculiar intonation difficult to describe."

The rumour of the strange revelation spread like wildfire. Spiritualists were jubilant. The phenomenon was bound up with "spirit control", spirit messages and reincarnation. Then Prof. Flournoy threw a bomb.

He subjected the collected fragments of the Martian language to a close and minute investigation. And it became clear to him that the inventor of the language had never known any other idiom than French. That the Martian phonetics were an incomplete reproduction of French phonetics. That as a work of art, the subconscious construction of this language, with all its features of its own, was infantile. But as a feat of memory, it was a prodigious achievement.

This devastating criticism led to bitter acrimony. Prof. Lemaître had already acknowledged the extramundane origin of the Martian language. But Prof. Henry of the Sorbonne completely vindicated Prof. Flournoy's conclusions. He showed that the Martian words, with the exception of a residue of two per cent, were derivable from known terrestrial words.

The medium and most of her friends refused to bow to this verdict. As if to eliminate the defects of the Martian revelations the entranced medium changed her stellar habitat. She described a grotesque Ultra-Martian world, the language of which differed singularly from the Martian, the tallest people of which were three feet high, with heads twice as broad as high, living in low, long cabins without windows or doors but with a tunnel about ten feet long running from them into the earth. The language had a very peculiar rhythm, and was absolutely new.

Uranus was the subject of similar exploration. The curious hieroglyphs of its writing did not express letters but words. The ideograms, however, showed no resemblance to the objects which they represented. In this Prof. Flournoy found another proof of infantile imagination. This essential characteristic of ideographic writing was omitted because the medium strove to create something defying all analysis.

Against the second searching analysis the medium found refuge in the Moon. The Lunarian revelations, however, were no longer submitted to Prof. Flournoy. Deeply wounded in her vanity, Mlle. Helene Smith broke with him and the world of science.

This was a great loss. The planetary revelations disclosed but a single facet of Helene Smith's amazing personality. There were other mysteries which no scientific ingenuity had elucidated.

Lifeless things stirred and moved about in her presence. Raps sounded on the furniture. Distant instruments played by themselves. Objects of unknown origin dropped from the air: shells filled with sand and still wet from the sea, a Chinese vase full of water with a rose in it, Chinese coins, branches of trees, flowers, and leaves of ivy which bore in legible characters the name of the spirit control who claimed to achieve these miracles.

Prof. Flournoy was a psychologist. He could not explain the physical phenomena, so he pushed them aside. And as they were discouraged, they waned and soon completely vanished. What remained was sufficient to perplex a whole gathering of scientists. Helene Smith could find lost objects, she could predict the future, she saw spirits who announced their name audibly to her hearing, and she saw visions which disclosed the intimate past.

"Speaking for myself alone," wrote Prof. Flournoy, "I was greatly surprised to recognize in scenes which passed before my eyes events which had occurred in my own family prior to my

birth. Whence could the medium, whom I had never met before, have derived the knowledge of events belonging to a remote past, of a private nature, and utterly unknown to any living person?"

He would not bow to spirits. In respect of "Leopold" (alias Cagliostro), the chief of the invisible group, he conceded that "it would be impossible to imagine a being more independent and more different from Mlle. Smith herself, having a more personal character, and individuality more marked, or a more certain actual existence."

But he would not admit his real presence behind the automatism of Mlle. Smith. The theory of a secondary personality made to him a much stronger appeal.

He adopted a similar attitude towards the great trance romance of the "Royal Cycle". This began by the announcement that Helene was the reincarnation of Marie Antoinette. Periodically, the medium seemed to sink back into this historic personality and enacted the role of the queen in a brilliant manner. The supernatural element was comparatively scarce in this impersonation, but it abounded in the "Oriental Cycle". In this the medium was said to be Simandini, daughter of an Arab sheik in the sixth century, and wife of Prince- Sivrouka Nayaka, lord of the fortress of Tchandranguiri, built in the province of Kanara, Hindustani, in 1401. After many years of married-life she was burned alive on her husband's funeral pyre. To the amazement of all, Helene Smith actually spoke Hindustani in this phase of her personality, and wrote a few words in good Arabic. She used Sanscrit words well adapted to the situation. They expressed a personal thought and were not merely a series of senseless phrases.

After a long and laborious research, Prof. Flournoy found an old history of India which confirmed the main facts. They were unrecorded in other history books. So Prof. Flournoy saw himself forced to admit that the precise historical information given by Leopold and the language spoken by Simandini defied normal explanation.

Helene Smith died in 1929. Her correspondence and other papers were posthumously analysed by Prof. W. Deonna, of Geneva, in a bulky volume(1). Full particulars were revealed of a new, religious phase in which Helene Smith kept herself aloof from science and spiritualism alike. She painted huge religious tableaux; visions in which Christ, the Virgin, the Apostles and the Archangels play dominant roles. This is, in her own words, how they were done:

"On the days when I am to paint I am always roused very early - generally between five and six in the morning - by three loud knocks at my bed. I open my eyes and see my bedroom brightly illuminated, and immediately understand that I have to stand up and work. I dress myself by the beautiful iridescent light, and wait a few moments, sitting in my armchair, until the feeling comes that I have to work. It is never delayed. All at once I stand up and walk to the picture. When about two steps before it I feel a strange sensation, and probably fall asleep at the same moment. I know later on that I must have slept because I notice that my fingers are covered with different colours, and I have no remembrance of having used them, though when a picture is being begun I am ordered to prepare colours on my palette every evening, and have it near my bed."

(1) De la Planete Mars en Terre Sainte, Paris, 1932.

She seldom made use of a brush. She put on the first coating of paint with her three middle fingers in the same way as if she was pressing an electric bell. For the second coating she moved the same fingers very lightly from right to left and back, thus producing a very smooth surface. The outlines were made by the nails, and the sky with the palm of the hand.

Prof. Deonna admits the remarkable qualities of the paintings and says that they are far above anything she could normally produce. He makes no attempt to explain one incredible feature. It was a habit of Helene Smith to have photographs taken of the successive stages of the pictures. To her utter despair some of the negatives of the painting "Judas" were spoiled. Her guardian angel appeared and announced that she would witness a miracle. Two days later the portrait began to fade out. The beard, the moustache, the tears of Judas and other details gradually disappeared until the painting returned to the stage when it was last successfully photographed. Then an inscription appeared: "God's will, November 18, 1913". The photographs were taken again. The inscription vanished and Helene Smith finished the picture as before.

Incidentally, objective proof was discovered that the visions which she painted were accompanied by luminous phenomena. Helene Smith exposed photographic plates which were found among her effects. These seem to show that a ball of light had illuminated the room, as recorded in her correspondence. But, of course, the proof rests on the good faith of the medium alone.

Chapter 5: How Sir William Crookes came to Believe in Spirits Story of Florence Cook

- Nandor Fodor -

THERE ARE certain facts in nature so strange and so far-reaching in their implications that apparently no amount of testimony as to their occurrence is sufficient for those who have not experienced them in person. If good fortune grants certain individuals such experience and they have the courage to announce things that appear grossly incredible to the public, they become targets of the same suspicion and misapprehension as they themselves exhibited before towards others. Apparently no reputation is big enough to establish facts that seem too revolutionary in their nature. Sir William Crookes, the greatest physicist of the last century, affords an example of this.

In the seventies, when Darwin, Huxley, Faraday, Tyndal and Carpenter lifted scientific materialism to its peak, a set of miracle workers made London gasp. Great Spiritualist mediums produced phenomena which could have rightly driven any scientist to despair. They would not be laid. So the clamour arose for a St. George to give them the quietus. The choice of "eminent men exercising great influence on the thought of the country", fell on William Crookes. He did not pretend to understand the subject. He had no views or opinions on it.

"I prefer to enter," he said, "upon the inquiry with no preconceived notions whatever as to what can or cannot be, but with all my senses alert and ready to convey information to the brain; believing, as I do, that we have by no means exhausted all human knowledge or fathomed the depth of all physical forces."

He believed the time was rapidly approaching to "drive the useless residuum of spiritualism hence into the unknown limbo of magic and necromancy".

The entering of Crookes into the arena was received with jubilation in the daily Press. They foresaw a death-blow which would annihilate spiritualism. Expectations were never followed by greater disappointment. After having brought all his scientific acumen to bear on the alleged phenomena, Crookes ended in proclaiming the discovery of a new force and, in subsequent years, of a new world of invisible beings.

The first conclusion was reached in experiments with D. D. Home. In bewilderment, Crookes stated in his report⁽¹⁾:

"Even now, on recalling the details of what I witnessed, there is an antagonism in my mind between reason, which pronounces it to be scientifically impossible, and the consciousness that my senses, both of touch and sight - and these corroborated, as they were, by the senses of all who were present - are not lying witnesses when they testify against my preconceptions."

(1) "Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism" (reprinted from the "Quarterly Journal of Science"), London, 1874.

Those present were Mr. Williams, his chemical assistant, Mr. Walter Crookes, his brother, Sir William Higgins, the eminent physicist and astronomer, ex-President of the Royal Society, and Serjeant Cox, a prominent lawyer and judge. They testified that they had seen an accordion, placed into an electrically insulated cage, float in the air and being played upon by an invisible hand, and that they had seen the beam of a cleverly contrived balance automatically register a pressure of five thousand grains when it was touched by no mortal hand.

The secretaries of the Royal Society refused Crookes's invitation to witness these amazing things; his report was not printed, even its title was suppressed in the publications of the Royal Society, and Crookes himself was grossly abused. His answer to his detractors was:

"A medium walking into my dining-room cannot, while seated in one part of the room with a number of persons keenly watching him, by trickery make an accordion play in my own hand

when I hold it keys downwards, or cause the same accordion to float about the room playing all the time. He cannot introduce machinery which will wave window curtains, or pull up Venetian blinds eight feet off, tie a knot in a handkerchief and place it in a far corner of the room, sound notes on a distant piano, cause a fan to move about and fan the company, or set in motion a pendulum when enclosed in a glass case firmly cemented to the wall."

If Crookes's first report was a shock to science, worse was yet to come. In the presence of a fifteen years-old schoolgirl, he was privileged to witness for three years, under his own conditions and under the strictest scientific control which he could devise, the most amazing manifestations known in human history. No sooner had Florence Cook, the wonder medium, gone into trance in a cabinet, when out walked another being, a beautiful girl, who claimed to be a spirit, the daughter, when in the flesh, of Sir Henry Morgan, the buccaneer. A seeming fairy-tale presented as a solemn truth.

Crookes was a practical man. He had two problems to grapple with. 1) To establish that "Katie King", the wondrous maiden, was not the medium; 2) To assure himself that no human being could find ingress into his laboratory to trick him.

He subjected both the medium and "the spirit" to an exact scrutiny. He measured the difference in their height, noted the absence of a blister on Katie's neck, the absence of perforation in Katie's ears, the differences in complexion, in bodily proportions, manner and expression. He had himself photographed with Katie King and with Florence Cook in the same position. While his picture completely tallied in the two photographs there was an easily observable discrepancy between the two girls. At a later period Katie allowed him to go into the cabinet.

"I went cautiously into the room," says Crookes, in his shorthand notes, "it being dark, and felt about for Miss Cook. I found her crouching on the floor. Kneeling down, I let air enter the phosphorus lamp, and by its light I saw the young lady dressed in black velvet as she had been in the early part of the evening, and to all appearances perfectly senseless; she did not move when I took her hand and held the light quite close to her face, but continued quietly breathing. Raising the lamp, I looked around and saw Katie standing close behind Miss Cook. She was robed in flowing white drapery as we had seen her previously during the séance. Holding one of Miss Cook's hands in mine, and still kneeling, I passed the lamp up and down so as to illuminate Katie's whole figure, and satisfy myself thoroughly that I was really looking at the veritable Katie whom I had clasped in my arms a few minutes before, and not at the phantasm of a disordered brain. She did not speak but moved her head and smiled in recognition. Three separate times did I carefully examine Miss Cook, crouching before me, to be sure that the hand I held was that of a living woman, and three times did I turn the lamp to Katie and examine her with steadfast scrutiny, until I had no doubt whatever of her objective reality.

"To imagine that an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then to successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a séance, and should meet with even better success in my own home than at that of her parents, knowing that she visited me with the express object of submitting to strict scientific tests - to imagine, I say, the Katie King of the last three years to be the result of imposture does more violence to one's reason and commonsense than to believe her what she herself affirms."

What was the purport of these mysteries? How did they originate? The Cook family could not provide much information, except that Mrs. Cook, the mother, persuaded her somewhat reluctant daughter to participate in that amusing game - table-turning. Something totally unexpected and astonishing happened. The table behaved like a thing alive and Miss Cook rose in the air. This miracle was followed by making friends with the spiritualists and joining them in sittings. But the mother soon called a stop to this, for Miss Cook was carried dangerously over the heads of the sitters, and invisible hands stripped her of her clothing. So she only sat at home in the presence of her mother, her sister Florence, who also proved to be a medium, and Marie, the maid. It was in the Cook home at Hackney that the entity calling herself Katie King commenced her strange ministration which was to last for exactly three years. Her first attempt to materialize was made in April, 1872. A face like a death mask was seen between the curtains of the cabinet. As time went on, the outlines became clearer and more lifelike. At first it was hollow at the back, later it filled out, and a year after

her first appearance, clothed in abundant white drapery, Katie walked out of the cabinet. She showed a strange resemblance to the medium which, so she said, she could not help. To prove that she was distinct, she changed the colour of her face to chocolate and jet black.

The coming of Crookes definitely settled her claim to be a separate identity. Cromwell Varley, the eminent electrician of the Atlantic Cable Company, designed for Crookes an electric circuit, connected with a resistance coil and a galvanometer. The movements of the galvanometer were shown in the outer room to the sitters on a large graduated scale. Had the medium removed the wires, the galvanometer would have shown violent fluctuations. Nothing suspicious occurred, yet Katie appeared, waved her arms, shook hands with her friends and wrote in their presence.

As an additional test, Crookes asked Katie to plunge her hand into a chemical solution. No deflection of the galvanometer was noticed. This would have been infallibly the case if Katie had had the wires on her, because the solution would have modified the current.

There were other proofs.

"She called me after her into the back room," writes Florence Marryat(1), "and dropping her white garment, stood perfectly naked before me. 'Now', she said, 'you can see that I am a woman.' Which indeed she was, and a most beautifully made woman, too."

(1) "There Is No Death", London, 1891.

The drapery in which Katie King was clothed was a mystery in itself. She often allowed her sitters to touch it. Sometimes she cut as many as a dozen pieces from the lower part of her skirt, and made presents of them to different observers. She waved her hand over the holes, and lo! they were made good. Crookes examined the skirt inch by inch and found no hole, no marks or seam of any kind.

These pieces of drapery mostly melted into thin air, however carefully they were guarded. Rarely, they were rendered enduring. But in the latter cases, and in instances of careless operation, the medium's dress suffered. Katie explained that nothing material about her could be made to last without taking away some of the medium's vitality and weakening her. When Messrs. Howell and James, London, were asked to match a specimen of the drapery, they were unable to do so. They believed it to be of Chinese manufacture.

To Florence Marryat we owe a dramatic description of Katie's dematerialization in blazing light.

"She (Katie) took up her station against the drawing-room wall, with her arms extended as if she were crucified. Then three gas-burners were turned on to their full extent in a room about sixteen feet square. The effect upon Katie was marvellous. She looked like herself for the space of a second only, then she began gradually to melt away. I can compare the dematerialization of her form to nothing but a wax doll melting before a hot fire. First the features became blurred and indistinct; they seemed to run into each other. The eyes sank in the sockets, the nose disappeared, the frontal bone fell in. Next the limbs appeared to give way under her, and she sank lower and lower on the carpet, like a crumbling edifice. At last there was nothing but her head left above the ground - then a heap of white drapery only, which disappeared with a whisk, as if a hand had pulled it after her - and we were left staring by the light of three gas burners at the spot on which Katie had stood."

The farewell of Katie King on May 21st, 1874, was a scene poignant with drama and emotion. Katie, followed by Crookes, went into the cabinet and woke Miss Cook from her trance-an almost unprecedented act in spiritualistic history. They talked affectionately and Miss Cook shed many tears. She never saw Katie again.

At this point one may ask, was any attempt ever made to forcibly detain Katie King? Yes. On December 9th, 1873, Mr. W. Volckman, a guest of the Cooks, rushed forward, seized her hand, then her waist. A struggle ensued in which two of the medium's friends went to Katie's help. According to their testimony, she appeared to lose her legs and feet, made a movement similar to that of a seal and glided out of Mr. Volckman's grip, leaving no trace of corporeal existence behind. According to Volckman, she was forcibly freed. The incontestable fact, however, was that five minutes later, when the excitement subsided and the cabinet was opened, Miss Cook was found in black dress and boots with the tape tightly round her waist,

the knot sealed with the signet of the Earl of Caithness and untampered with. She was subsequently searched, but no trace of white drapery was discovered.

Katie King's place, after her farewell, was taken by another phantom, Marie, who sang and danced. An attempt by Sir George Sitwell on January 9th, 1880, to grab her was a brilliant success. She could not get away. She did not dissolve. She was found to be the medium, wearing only her corsets and flannel petticoat. The divested pieces of garment were brought out of the cabinet by another sitter. This time the medium did not fall ill. She kept another engagement next morning. But, according to Florence Marryat, following this exposure, she declined to sit unless someone remained in the cabinet with her. The choice fell on the authoress. She was tied to her with a stout rope and remained thus fastened together the whole of the evening. Marie appeared, sang and danced just in the same way as on the day before when she was seized.

In 1874 Miss Cook married Capt. Elgie Corner. To him we owe an amusing anecdote. Katie King was still on the scene when the medium got married; very much so; she walked about the house and went to bed with the medium, and Capt. Corner began to wonder whether he had married one woman or two.

Crookes never found the least sign of deception in Miss Cook. In a letter dated April 24th, 1904, on the death of Mrs. Corner, he expressed his deepest sympathy and declared again that the belief in an after-life owes much of its certainty to her mediumship.

Contrary to all allegations, Crookes never wavered or went back on his discoveries. In 1896 in his presidential address before the British Association at Bristol he declared: "No incident in my scientific career is more widely known than the part I took many years ago in certain psychic researches. Thirty years have passed since I published an account of experiments tending to show that outside our scientific knowledge there exists a Force exercised by intelligence differing from the ordinary intelligence common to mortals. I have nothing to retract. I adhere to my already published statements. Indeed, I might add much thereto."

And shortly before his death in a statement to *Light*, the leading psychic journal, he said:

"I have never had any occasion to change my mind on the subject. I am perfectly satisfied with what I have said in earlier days. It is quite true that a connection has been set up between this world and the next."

Chapter 6: Strange Beasts from the Beyond

Story of Franek Kluski

- Nandor Fodor -

THE FAMILIARS against whom Moses warred, who loom uncannily in witch trials and old tales of mystery, have been rehabilitated, and tamed, under the name of "controls" by Psychical Research. The ghost world, however, does not always respect the discipline of science, and occasionally investigators are visited by terrors of the dark which would chill the spine of the most hardened adventurer.

There are instances on record in which the visitants, who appear to be born into temporary existence through the agency of a materializing medium, were not human beings. They were the "beasts that perish"; animals whose presence inspired fear. To Franek Kluski, a Pole, whom the late Dr. Gustave Geley, Director of the Institut Metapsychique International of Paris, called the King of Mediums, we owe the most incredible experiences of this kind which scientists ever had the good fortune to share.

For the consideration of those who would accuse them of temporary insanity there are flashlight photographs, which demand an explanation. The best of these pictures (which is reproduced in Dr. Geley's classical *Clairvoyance and Materialization*(1) was taken in 1919 in Warsaw. A bird, described by Prof. Pawlowski, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as a hawk or buzzard, was heard to stretch its wings with a whirring sound, accompanied by blasts of wind. It "flew round, beating its wings against the walls and the ceiling; when it finally settled on the shoulder of the medium it was photographed with a magnesium flash, as the camera was accidentally focussed on the medium before, and was ready".



The phantom apeman of Kluski photographed.

(1) Pp. 266-267.

There was no possibility, we are assured, of introducing that bird surreptitiously into the room or hiding it after the manifestation. It appeared and vanished in the way of human phantoms.

There was another, more dangerous customer in charge of a completely luminous old man. Prof. Pawlowski describes the man (an Afghan native who called himself Hirkill) as a column of light. He illuminated all the sitters and even the more distant objects of the room. The light appeared to be focussed in his hands and in the region of his heart.

"Accompanying him always was a rapacious beast, the size of a very big dog, of a tawny colour, with slender neck, mouth full of large teeth, eyes which glowed in the darkness like a cat's, and which reminded the company of a maneless lion. It was occasionally wild in its behaviour, especially if persons were afraid of it, and neither the human nor the animal apparition was much welcomed by the sitters. The lion, as we may call him, liked to lick the sitters with a moist and prickly tongue, and gave forth the odour of a great feline, and even after the séance the sitters, and especially the medium, were impregnated with this acrid scent as if they had made a long stay in a menagerie among wild beasts."(1)



Phantom bird photographed by Flashlight on Kluski's shoulder.

(1) "Psychic Science", April, 1926.

The acrid scent was very pronounced with the weirdest of all these apparitions - the Pithecanthropus, which showed itself several times. "One of us," writes Dr. Geley, "at the séance of November 20th, 1920, felt its large shaggy head press hard on his right shoulder and against his cheek. The head was covered with thick,

coarse hair; a smell came from it like that of a deer or a wet dog. When one of the sitters put out his hand the Pithecanthropus seized it and licked it slowly three times. Its tongue was large and soft. At other times we all felt our legs touched by what seemed to be frolicsome dogs."

According to Col. Norbert Ocholowicz, "this ape was of such great strength that it could easily move a heavy book-case, filled with books, through the room, carry a sofa over the heads of the sitters, or lift the heaviest persons with their chairs into the air to the height of a tall person. Though the ape's behaviour sometimes caused fear, and indicated a low level of intelligence. it was never malignant. Indeed, it often expressed goodwill, gentleness and readiness to obey... It was seen for the last time at the séance of December 26th, 1922, in the same form as in 1919, and making the same sounds of smacking and scratching."

Of another small animal, reminding the sitters of a weasel, the following description was quoted by Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, widow of the founder of the British College of Psychic Science:

"It used to run quickly over the table on to the sitters' shoulders, stopping every moment and smelling their hands and faces with a small, cold nose; sometimes, as if frightened, it jumped from the table and rambled through the whole room, turning over small objects, and shuffling papers lying on the table and writing-desk. It appeared at six or seven seances, and was last seen in June, 1923."

Kluski's animals are unique in species but not as phenomena. Two other Polish contemporaries, Burgik and Guzyk, demonstrated similar apparitions. Prof. Richet, the world-famous physiologist of the Sorbonne, writes of a séance with Burgik(1):

"My trouser leg was strongly pulled, and a strange ill-defined form that seemed to have paws like those of a dog or small monkey climbed on my knee. I could feel its weight very light, and something like the muzzle of an animal (?) touched my cheek. It was moist and made a grunting noise like a thirsty dog."

(1) "Thirty Years of Psychical Research", London., 1923.

Other investigators with other mediums have also testified to such amazing adventures. Gambier Bolton, Fellow of the Zoological Society, writes in his *Ghosts in Solid Form*:

"Materialization of both beasts and birds sometimes appeared during our experiments, the largest and most startling being that of a seal which appeared on one occasion when Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley was present.

"We suddenly heard a remarkable voice calling out some absurd remarks in loud tones, finishing off with a shrill whistle.

"'Why, that must be our old parrot,' said the lady of the house. 'He lived in this room for many years, and would constantly repeat those very words.'

"A small wild animal from India which had been dead for three years or more, and had never been seen or heard of by the Sensitive, and was known only to one sitter, suddenly ran out from the spot where the Sensitive was sitting, breathing heavily and in a state of deep trance, the little creature uttering exactly the same cry which it had always used as a sign of pleasure during its earth life. It had shown itself altogether on or about ten different occasions, staying in the room for more than two minutes at a time and then disappearing as suddenly as it had arrived upon the scene, but on this occasion the lady who had owned it during its life called it to her by its pet name, and then it proceeded to climb slowly up on to her lap. Resting there quietly for about half a minute it then attempted to return, but in doing so caught one of its legs in the lace with which the lady's skirt was covered. It struggled violently, and at last got itself free, but not until it had torn the lace for nearly three inches. At the conclusion of the experiment a medical man reported that there were five green-coloured hairs hanging in the torn lace, which had evidently become detached from the little animal's legs during its struggles. The lady at once identified the colour and the texture of the hairs, and this was confirmed by the other sitter-himself a naturalist - who had frequently seen and handled the

animal during its earth life. The five hairs were carefully collected, placed in tissue paper, and then shut up in a light-tight and damp-proof box. After a few days they commenced to dwindle in size, and finally disappeared entirely."

To return to our Poles, Burgik and Guzyk had questionable reputations. They were professional mediums. Kluski, on the other hand, is a distinguished professional man, a poet and writer. His real name has not been made known. In him powers of "physical" mediumship co-exist with remarkable intellectual psychic gifts; which is a rare combination. Strange presentiments, visions of distant events, and the facility of seeing phantoms, were his endowment from early childhood, but his "physical" powers were only accidentally discovered in a sitting with Guzyk in 1919. Their manifestation annoyed him, but his curiosity was aroused and he consented to experiments. Like Mme. d'Esperance, he preserved consciousness during the phenomena of materialization, and could give invaluable subjective accounts of his own sensations to men of science, whom he was always very willing to oblige. There was no facet in his strange gifts which did not lend itself to the fullest and most rigorous scientific examination. An instance of his luminous phenomena, as recorded by Dr. Geley, is the following:

"A large luminous trail like a nebulous comet, and about half a metre long, formed behind Kluski about a metre above his head and seemingly about the same distance behind him. This nebula was constituted of tiny bright grains broadcast, among which there were some specially brilliant points. This nebula oscillated quickly from right to left and left to right, and rose and fell. It lasted about a minute, disappeared and reappeared several times. After the sitting I found that the medium, who had been naked for an hour, was very warm. He was perspiring on the back and at the armpits; he was much exhausted."

At the Institut Metapsychique of Paris there are eloquent proofs of Kluski's supernormal powers on view. They include plaster casts of human hands with fingers bent and joined. The mould is fine and delicate, and the texture of the skin perfect. But whose skin? That question cannot be answered. For the hands which alternately dipped into buckets filled with hot paraffin and cold water ended at the wrist. They had no visible owner. When the paraffin shell thickened the hand faded away, vanished, dematerialized and left a perfect glove behind. The operation only took three minutes. Normally, it would take twenty minutes to produce a paraffin glove. But the hand, withdrawing from it, would burst the shell at the joints if the fingers were bent, and at the wrist. The Kluski gloves defied normal human production. They showed blue spots, traces of cholesterin which Dr. Geley, unknown to all, mixed with the paraffin to have further evidence that the gloves were made on the spot.

The excellence of Kluski's phenomena is due to his economy in the use of his mysterious power. Not being a professional medium, he only sits for those he cares for, and at comparatively long intervals. Thus he easily recuperates from the drain on his vital forces. When, after an interval of rest, he agrees to sit again, he knows that his pent-up psychic energies will produce startling manifestations.

Chapter 7: His Body was Autographed by Invisible People Story of Charles Foster

- Nandor Fodor -

VISITORS THAT do not leave their names printed on cards but leave them embossed in angry red wheals on the body of their host! Has any novelist ever eclipsed this in fantasy?

For the blase individual who refuses to admit to bewilderment, it should be added that the visitors were invisible; that they committed no outrage, and that the phenomenon, a chief feature of Charles Foster's mediumship, is recognized in psychical research under the term of dermography - writing on the skin.

Charles Foster was an American medium. His chequered career furnishes a strange record owing to his unstable moral character, but its strangeness is nothing in comparison with that of his astounding phenomena.

Skin writing was his speciality. He stripped his arm or bared his chest. Before the sitter's eye the name of a dead friend began to appear in raised wheals on his skin.

The incident which wins for him an undying fame in the heart of all story tellers rests on the direct testimony of George C. Bartlett, his biographer.

As told in *The Salem Seer*, a certain Mr. Adams came to call on Foster. The medium gave him descriptions of his dead relatives and delivered many messages. Mr. Adams apparently trailed clouds of the dead behind him. Foster saw the room filled with them, and the sitter departed greatly impressed.

At two o'clock in the morning Foster woke up Bartlett. He could not sleep. The room was still filled with the Adams family. He complained that they were writing their names over him.

Bartlett, amused and astonished, counted eleven distinct names on Foster's body. One was written across his forehead, others on his arms and several on his back. He was scribbled all over like a writing-pad.

Another entertaining story is of two sceptics who rudely seized Foster's arm. They demanded to see the "trick" while they held his hand. They wanted their names. A minute later they left crestfallen. In large, round characters Foster's arm "spelled" out:

"Two fools!"

But anecdotes cannot be expected to carry conviction. The skin of certain neurotic people is so sensitive that if it is scratched by a blunt instrument or nails, letters may appear on it in a few minutes. Many mediums joined their skin writing demonstrations with pellet reading. They burnt the pellet on which a question or a name was written and rubbed their arm or forehead with the ashes. Such simple artifice could have afforded ample opportunity of covertly tracing an intended message from the dead.

In recent years, however, the phenomenon has been established as genuine beyond a shadow of doubt. At the Institut Metapsychique International of Paris, Mme. Olga Kahl produced on her skin mentally communicated words and images. It is also known from Kraft-Ebbing's records with hysteric patients that writing traced on the anaesthetic right side may appear reversed on the left.

Similar phenomena have been noted in the stigmatic class. To give an illustration Malcolm Bird, then Assistant Editor to the *Scientific American* of New York, wrote of his experience in Berlin:

"Frau Vollhardt suddenly gave a very realistic shriek of pain and held out her hand for all to see. On the back of her hand was a quantity of red marks, some actually bleeding... A handful of forks could not have been held in such a manner as to inflict these wounds. No single instrument that I ever saw would have done the trick, unless it be a nutmeg grater. The holes were small and round, and quite deep; after ten or fifteen minutes they were still plainly to be

seen."

Eleonore Zugun, the Rumanian peasant girl, was "bitten by Draku" (the devil) on her face and forehead. Wheals on her right arm were photographed at the National Laboratory for Psychical Research(1).

(1) Proceedings, Vol. 1, 1927-29, of the National Laboratory for Psychical Research.

If such wounds are self-inflicted, an understanding of the mysteries "telekinetic" phenomena will eventually provide the key. For the fact that skin writing can be demonstrated by distant contact with the skin was attested as early as 1869, before the London Dialectical Committee which held an investigation into spiritualism. Manuel Eyre testified to the following experience with Mrs. Seymour at Waukeegan, near Chicago:

"In trance, she would hold out one arm, and with the forefinger of the other hand made a rapid motion as if writing, the movement of the finger being in the air about a foot from the arm; a few minutes after she stripped off her sleeve, and there on her arm, so distinctly written that it could be read across the room, was the peculiar signature of the spirit giving the communication."

The autographs on Foster's skin, or on that of others, did not endure. They usually disappeared in a few minutes. But they were observable sufficiently long to leave no doubt as to their phenomenal nature. In England, Dr. Ashburner, one of the Royal physicians, examined them under a powerful magnifying glass. He noted that they were in relief, and that the colouring matter was under the skin. The colour disappeared after 2 or 3 minutes.

The *elite* of the day took enormous interest in Foster. Lord Lytton invited him to his place at Knebworth. Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, Robert Chambers and William Howitt had frequent sittings with him, not solely to see an autograph book that was alive! Many things, equally mysterious, and even more impressive than this happened in the presence of the strange American. The furniture grew restless if he was in the house. It tossed about at night, or even in daylight in an adjoining room where there was no one present. This is what Dr. Ashburner witnessed(1):

"Mr. Foster, who is possessed of a fine voice, was accompanying himself while he sang. Both feet were on the pedals, when the pianoforte rose into the air and was gracefully swung in the air from side to side for at least five or six minutes. During this time the castors were about at the height of a foot from the carpet."

(1) "Notes and Studies in the Philosophy of Animal Magnetism and Spiritualism", London, 1867.

He also had some marvellous "materialization" experiences with Foster.

"One evening," he writes, "I witnessed the presence of nine hands floating over the dining-table."

Nine hands must belong to at least five people. But what sort of people are they who only make themselves visible up to their wrists? What power is at their command?

Foster was sometimes afraid of them. "In one instance," says Dr. Ashburner, "he grasped my right hand and beseeched me not to quit hold of him; for he said there was no knowing where the spirits might convey him.

"I held his hand, and he was floated in the air towards the ceiling. At one time Mrs. W. C. felt a substance at her head, and putting up her hands, discovered a pair of boots above her head."

The accusations of fraud frequently levelled at Foster's head were based on minor phenomena, mostly on pellet reading, the most dubious and now defunct psychic manifestation.

Foster was a great pellet artist. His usual procedure was to ask the sitters to write the names of their deceased relatives on slips of paper while he was out of the room, roll them up and put as many blank

pellets as they liked together with them in a heap on the table. On his return, raps sounded in the room. They were intelligent, and stopped at certain letters when the alphabet was spelt out, and so gave a name. Foster then picked up the very pellet on which the name was written, opened it, and gave his clairvoyant descriptions of the spirit.

Part of this demonstration could be rendered by any conjurer. Many of them could even emulate Foster's feat. No doubt, he often resorted to conjuring methods. A professional medium's life is not always a pleasant one. He is the prey of forces over which he has no command. Periodically, his strange gift may lapse for no known reason or because of its abuse. It requires moral fortitude to confess to a lapse. Foster had courage, but of the wrong kind.

In January, 1862, on the invitation of Alderman Thomas P. Barkas, he gave four séances in Newcastle-on-Tyne. At each of these ten persons participated. Their names were kept in a private book and withheld from the medium. Yet with these forty strangers the errors in the clairvoyant messages did not exceed three per cent, and these usually happened during some trifling confusion or controversy. But when it came to writing out the names of the departed spirits, the spelling displayed the same errors which were noticeable on the pellets. Such mistakes, of course, the medium could not have recognised. But the dear departed would hardly forget how to write their names. If the performance was genuine, clairvoyance would quite sufficiently explain it without calling in the spirits of the dead.

Foster's stay in England did not end on a pleasant note. In 1863 *The Spiritual Magazine* stated that the editor had received from Judge Edmonds of New York such "sickening details of his criminality in another direction that we should no longer soil our pages with his mediumship".

The boycott was not effective enough to reach the ears of Napoleon III. Mediums were well received in his court, and Foster also enjoyed the privilege of being entertained by him.

But he could not be stayed on the downward path.

In New York, in 1872, as we read in Truesdell's *Bottom Facts of Spiritualism*, he was caught in palming the pellets and reading them by continually relighting his cigar, the match being held in the hollow of his hand.

In his later years he became addicted to alcoholism, and in 1888, at the age of fifty, he died in delirium tremens.

His exit was not unique. Some other mediums have shared the same fate. There is some reason to suppose that the production of "physical" phenomena depletes the organism to such an extent that a craving for stimulants ensues. If the medium's strength of character and will-power is then wanting he may succumb.

For the weak-willed and the immoral there are dangers in mediumship which may easily work havoc with them regardless of the fact that they may periodically produce brilliant supernormal phenomena.

Chapter 8: Visions and Predictions of the Poughkeepsie Seer Story of Andrew Jackson Davis

- Nandor Fodor -

HAVE THE denizens of that invisible world of which mediums are the door-keepers ever communicated anything new and helpful to humanity?

As our age is a technical one, "new and helpful" means inventions or discoveries. Why exactly should the spirits of the dead, for such is their own claim, become more mechanical minded in an immaterial world than they were when engrossed in matter, is not quite clear. Nor why such limitations should be placed on helpfulness and novelty in general. But as it is frequently argued that nothing useful to science has yet been revealed in such alleged communications and revelations from the great Beyond, it will not be without interest to point to some curious records in psychic literature.

These records reveal the futility of revelations. They prove that it avails us little to be vouchsafed ideas which are more than one step ahead of our present knowledge and understanding.

A great American seer predicted the motor-car in technical details, and also the typewriter about eighty years ago. The world took no account of it, and failed to realize that a new scientific principle was divulged. It passed it by without comprehension.

This is how the coming of the motor-car was announced in Andrew Jackson Davis' *Penetralia* in 1856:

"Look out about these days for carriages and travelling saloons on country roads - without horses, without steam, without any visible motive power - moving with greater speed and far more safety than at present. Carriages will be moved by a strange and beautiful and simple admixture of aqueous and atmospheric gases-so easily condensed, so simply ignited, and so imparted by a machine somewhat resembling fire engines as to be entirely concealed and manageable between the forward wheels. These vehicles will prevent many embarrassments now experienced by persons living in thinly-populated territories. The first requisite for these land-locomotives will be good roads, upon which, with your engine, without your horses, you may travel with great rapidity. These carriages seem to be of uncomplicated construction."

In the same book the typewriter is outlined as follows:

"I am almost moved to invent an automatic psychographer - that is, an artificial soul-writer. It may be constructed something like a piano, one brace or scale of keys to represent the elementary sounds; another and lower tier to represent a combination, and still another for a rapid recombination so that a person, instead of playing a piece of music, may touch off a sermon or a poem."

Had such ideas been submitted by a scientist the later inventors might have been accused of plagiarism. But Andrew Jackson Davis, the Pough-keepsie seer, was a shoemaker's apprentice. Up to the age of 16 he received no education. Was he, then, a genius who could make up for educational defects to an astounding degree? This he did, but through no earthly learning.

In 1844 he passed through a strange experience. In a state of semi-trance he wandered away from home and found himself, next morning, forty miles distant in the mountains. Here he met, whether awake or adream, two venerable men whom he later identified as Galen and Swedenborg. The meeting set his soul afire. With an illuminated mind the boy of eighteen returned from the mountains and became the apostle of a new philosophy.

A year later in magnetic trance he commenced to dictate a monumental work: *The Principles of Nature, her Divine Revelations, and a Voice to Mankind*. For fifteen months Dr. Lyon, his magnetizer, repeated each sentence as he uttered it, and the Rev. Fishbough, the scribe, took them down, restricting himself to grammatical corrections only. Dr. George Bush, Professor of Hebrew at New York University, heard Davis

quote correct Hebrew, and he established the seer's good faith by impromptu questions put to him while in the state of trance. His opinion on the book was:

"Taken as a whole the work is a profound and elaborate discussion of the philosophy of the universe, and for grandeur of conception, soundness of principle, clearness of illustration, order of arrangement and encyclopaedic range of subjects, I know no work of any single mind that will bear away from it the palm."

Owing to Prof. Bush's enthusiastic testimony, the book was received with enormous interest, and passed through 34 successive editions. Its originality has never been contested. But some analytical investigations revealed strange coincidences. The *Revelations*, for the most part, expressed Swedenborg's views, the language was, in several cases, "all but absolutely verbal", or identical with that of Swedenborg.

Was this proof of Davis' claim that Swedenborg himself possessed him while he was in trance? If not, by what sort of recondite mental process could an ignorant country boy get hold of the contents of musty old books of the very existence of which he must have been unaware?

Some astronomical statements present a still greater puzzle. Writing in March, 1846, Davis speaks of nine planets. Seven were known at the time. The existence of the eighth was yet hypothetical. It was only discovered in September, 1846, vindicating completely the calculations of Leverrier. But six months prior to this discovery Davis revealed the planet's density. His statement agreed with later findings. The ninth planet, Pluto, was only put last year on the heavenly map. And it still awaits verification that there is a great central sun in the immensity of space around which our solar system and all the fixed stars revolve.

Other statements might be considered highly questionable or absurd. Like Swedenborg, Davis claimed that the planets, with the exception of the three outer ones, were all inhabited. On Saturn, he put a more advanced humanity than ours. On Venus and Mercury an inferior one. The canals of Mars were yet undiscovered in his age. The planet Mars, in consequence, receives no conspicuous attention.

The book made Davis famous, both as a medium and as a philosopher. His next big work, *The Great Harmonia*, passed through forty editions. There is a wealth of thought in Davis' harmonial philosophy which, strangely enough, has only been harvested in England by W. H. Evans who, too, rose into seership from the shoemaker's bench.

The question to whom should Davis' great literary activity be ascribed, to himself or to agencies out of flesh, is an intriguing problem. For after his first monumental work Davis dispensed with the services of his magnetizer. By a voluntary effort he could throw himself in a "superior condition". He could feel, see and perceive things not open to mortal eyes. Returning to the normal state, he remembered all his inner perceptions and simply wrote them down.

Of "physical phenomena" he knew almost nothing. He was a purely mental medium, a great clairvoyant, a forerunner of Modern Spiritualism. His description of how the soul passes out of the body at death is the first such record, and is still quoted as a classic. It was published in his *Death and the After-Life*, and reads:

"Suppose the person is now dying. It is to be a rapid death. The feet first grow cold. The clairvoyant sees right over the head what may be called a magnetic halo, an ethereal emanation, in appearance golden, and throbbing as though conscious. The body is now cold up to the knees and elbows, and the emanation has ascended higher in the air. The legs are cold to the hips and the arms to the shoulders; and the emanation, though it has not risen higher in the room, is more expanded. The death-coldness steals over the breast and around on either side, and the emanation has attained a higher position near the ceiling. The person has ceased to breathe, the pulse is still, and the emanation is elongated and fashioned in the outline of the human form. Beneath it is connected with the brain. The head of the person is internally throbbing - a slow, deep throb - not painful, like the beat of the sea. Hence, the thinking faculties are rational, while nearly every part of the person is dead. Owing to the brain's momentum, I have seen a dying person, even at the last feeble pulse-beat, rouse impulsively and rise up in bed to converse with a friend; but the next instant he was gone - his brain being the last to yield up the life principle. The golden emanation, which extends up midway to the ceiling, is connected with the brain by a very fine life-thread. Now the body of the emanation ascends. Then appears something white and shining, like a human head; next,

in a very few moments, a faint outline of the face divine; then the fair neck and beautiful shoulders; then, in rapid succession, come all parts of the new body down to the feet - a bright, shining image, a little smaller than its physical body, but a perfect prototype, or reproduction in all, except its disfigurements. The fine life-thread continues attached to the old brain. The next thing is the withdrawal of the electric principle. When this thread "snaps" the spiritual body is free and prepared to accompany its guardians to the Summer Land. Yes, there is a spiritual body; it is sown in dishonour and raised in brightness."

Since then, Davis' description of the emergence of the spiritual body has been borne out by many curious and sensational experiences.

In his late years the Poughkeepsie seer kept a small book-shop in Boston. He sat at the counter and in a little back room prescribed herbal remedies, not as a quack but as a professional doctor. Such wonderful education did he receive at his invisible university that a medical degree was granted to him many years before. Actually, he was a practitioner from the first years of his mediumship. He had X-ray eyes. They saw through the patient's body and located the centres of illness at once.

Did he retain Swedenborg as a guide or inspirer to his dying day? Or did he undergo a radical change of views? The question is suggested by an episode told by Anthony Philpot, an American journalist, in *The Quest for Dean Bridgman Conner*.

Prof. Lutoslawsky, of the University of Krakow, a distinguished Polish psychologist and mystic, was the guest of Prof. William James in America in 1907. He read the books of A. J. Davis and believed him to be dead.

"When I assured him," writes Philpot, "that Dr. Davis was alive at the time, both he and Prof. James were astonished... Then Prof. Lutoslawsky said: 'I must see him. I would rather meet him than any man in America.'

"So I made an appointment with Dr. Davis, and two days later I took Prof. Lutoslawsky to the little office in the rear of the store on Warren Ave., and introduced him to the man he would rather meet 'than any man in America'.

"They looked at each other for a moment as they clasped hands, and then Prof. Lutoslawsky exclaimed: 'Why, you are Swedenborg!'

"'Yes, I am,' said Dr. Davis in a most off-hand way as he turned to place a bottle on one of the shelves. Professor Lutoslawsky was speechless for some moments and I stood there looking at them both, to see if they were joking. But no, they were both very serious and silent. Then Professor Lutoslawsky said:

"'How long are you going to remain with us?'

"'Let me see,' said Dr. Davis as he looked thoughtfully about the little room. 'I have chores enough to do that will take me about three years. About three more years and then I'll be ready to go.' And he went on arranging his bottles again very calmly.

"'Chores? Chores?' said Professor Lutoslawsky, with a puzzled look on his face. 'What do you mean by chores?' It was evidently a new word to him.

"Dr. Davis explained that he meant work - work that would take him about three years to finish.

"'Oh, now I understand,' said Professor Lutoslawsky. 'Then you are going to leave us in three years?'

"The venerable Dr. Davis - he was then about eighty years of age - nodded his head.

"The whole thing made a rather curious impression on me at the moment, and I wondered if Professor Lutoslawsky really believed that Dr. Davis was a reincarnation of Swedenborg, and

whether Dr. Davis believed it himself. But they were both very serious and I said nothing."

Sequel: A. J. Davis died in 1910, three years later, though not exactly to the day.

Chapter 9: **Waking Up and Saving the Lost Souls of the Dead**

Story of Dr. and Mrs. Carl A. Wickland

- Nandor Fodor -

A DOCTOR may get many shocks in the pursuance of his professional duties, but no worse one could be imagined than to be suddenly addressed and reprimanded by a corpse which he was about to dissect.

That the doctor in the case need not have been necessarily drunk or insane is the solemn plea of Dr. Carl A. Wickland, member of the Chicago Medical Society, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Director of the National Psychological Institute of Los Angeles, California.

He was cutting on the arm and neck of the body of a woman which was for seven months on ice. Faintly as from a distance he heard a voice say distinctly:

"Don't murder me!"

He concluded that the words came from a child in the street, though no children were heard playing about.

The following afternoon he heard a rustling sound from a crumpled newspaper lying on the floor. But he paid no attention.

A few days later he held some trance experiments at his home with his wife. Towards the end, in a semi-comatose condition, his wife rose and struck at him angrily, saying:

"I have some bones to pick with you."

A period of struggle followed. Dr. Wickland had sufficient knowledge of the phenomena of the so-called spirit control to get alarmed. He asked the voice which spoke from the mouth of his wife what the trouble was.

"Why do you want to kill me?" the entity demanded to know.

Dr. Wickland answered that he was not killing anyone.

"Yes, you are. You are cutting on my arm and neck. I shouted at you not to murder me, and I struck that paper on the floor to frighten you, but you would not pay any attention."

Dr. Wickland understood. The entity in control believed herself to be the dead body he was dissecting. She apparently did not realize her apartness and still clung to the "mortal coil".

He took a deep breath and set out to tell the momentous story, to bring the awful truth home to his interlocutor that she was dead.

It was not his first case and far from being the worst one of the same nature. He grappled with it because no experiments on earth seemed to have so tremendous an issue hanging on them as this one.

Some time ago his wife was discovered to be what is called a trance medium. She did not like it. She was afraid of "disturbing the dead". Whereupon the voices that spoke through her organism during her state of unconsciousness explained to Dr. Wickland that a grievously wrong conception existed among mortals regarding the conditions prevailing after death.

They told him that in reality there was no death but a simple and natural transition to another world: that advanced human souls, on the other side of life, are ever striving to communicate with mortals to enlighten them as to the higher possibilities which await the progressive spirit, but that owing to the prevailing terrible ignorance a great majority of the dead do not realize the change that took place in their condition and continue to remain in their earthly haunts; that they are the cause of untold mischief and misery; that they

often produce invalidism, immorality, crime and seeming insanity, for they hang around those whose armour they can pierce and, ignorantly or maliciously, attempt to share their earthly existence.

It was also revealed that the greatest mission work on earth is waiting for those who would help these misguided souls, that they are nearer to earth than heaven, that they can be reached more easily by mortals than by advanced spirits. In their case a psychic intermediary would have to be found. The advanced souls would see that the dead who found no footing in their new life, and the obsessing entities, who exercised a vicious control over mortals in the body, should be attracted to the intermediary, and enlightened as to their true position. Mrs. Wickland was to be the psychic intermediary, and if Dr. Wickland would allow them to use her they would prove their case and would safeguard her from any harm.

Dr. Wickland gave his consent. He realized that criminology, psychopathology, and human thought in general, would have to undergo a revolutionary revision if the claims of the trance entities were proved.

It was following his consent that the dead owners of the corpses he was dissecting away from his home and unknown to his wife, were brought back to tell their story.

Most of these "unearthly" interviews started rather stormily. The temporary possessors of Mrs. Wickland's body would not admit that they were dead. If they were men, a mirror was held in front of them to prove that they were in a female body. They declared that they were hypnotized. Occasionally they grew violent and had to be expelled.

This expulsion took place by charges from a static electric machine. Why electric shocks should have the desired effect was not plain. But the visitants could not endure it.

Their violence was also dealt with on the "other side". On being brought back for another lesson these refractory spirits complained of having been kept in a dungeon. It appeared that, in accordance with a certain psychic law intelligent spirits could impose a condition of restriction around an ignorant spirit similar to imprisonment, an impenetrable, cell-like enclosure from which there was no escape. As soon as they showed repentance and willingness to adapt themselves to their new conditions they were freed and helped along the road of progress. This is the short history of how Dr. Wickland and his wife became missionaries of the dead. They founded first the Psycho-Pathological Institute of Chicago, and later, the National Psychological Institute of California, where, in the portals of two worlds, they still carry on their heroic work.

Nor are they alone in their undertaking. For theirs was no new and unique discovery. Rescue circles of spiritualists carry on similar missions all over the world. With very difficult cases they may not be capable to cope, but they teach and preach, they parley with the dead, and frequently bring the light of understanding into their life. Occasionally they clear haunted houses, and now and then succeed in curing cases of obsession.

The problem of obsession has been the subject of special scientific study for the past twenty years at the James Hyslop Institute of New York. The Institute was founded by Prof. James J. Hyslop, of Columbia University, an American pioneer of psychical research. In a chapter on obsession in his *Life After Death*, he writes:

"I fought against it for ten years after I was convinced that survival after bodily death was proved. But several cases forced upon me the consideration of the question."

Before his death Professor William James, the greatest psychologist of America, surrendered to the same belief.

"The refusal of modern enlightenment," he wrote, "to treat obsession as a hypothesis to be spoken of as even possible, in spite of the massive human tradition based on concrete experience in its favour, has always seemed to me a curious example of the power of fashion in things scientific. That the demon theory (not necessarily a devil theory) will have its innings again is to my mind absolutely certain."

Last year Dr. Titus Bull, the Director of the James Hyslop Institute, published a small book: *Analysis of Unusual Experiences in Healing Relative to Diseased Minds and Results of Materialism Foreshadowed*. Under this unassuming title, in a cold and dispassionate manner, astounding and stupefying discoveries are

submitted to an unheeding world.

Dr. Wickland's experiences were published as early as 1924 under the title *Thirty Years Among the Dead*. It is a book crammed with thrills, dramatic incidents and poignant emotions. One of its revelations concerns Harry Thaw, the eccentric American millionaire who, for no earthly reason, killed Stanford White, the famous architect of Madison Square Gardens, New York. According to Dr. Wickland, he was a psychic sensitive "unquestionably obsessed by avenging spirits who desired retribution for real or fancied injustice done to themselves or kindred". This is how the conclusion was reached:

"On July 15th, 1906, several weeks after the tragedy occurred, a strange spirit controlled Mrs. Wickland during a psychic circle, and she fell prostrate to the floor. Placing the form of my wife in a chair, I began questioning the controlling intelligence.

"The stranger strenuously objected to being touched, brusquely demanded to be left alone, and called out:

"Hey, there, waiter! Bring me a drink.'

"What kind of a drink do you want?'

"Bring me a whisky-and-soda, and be quick about it.'

"Who are you?'

"None of your business who I am.

"Where do you think you are?'

"In Madison Square Roof Garden, of course.'

"What is your name?'

"Stanford White, if you have to know.'

"Holding one hand on the back of his head, on the right side, and clutching at his chest and abdomen as if in great pain, he cried:

"Have a waiter bring me that whisky-and-soda!"

"I was about to ask further questions when the spirit's attention was attracted to some invisibles, and he began to tremble with fear.

"Are you seeing dead people?' I asked.

"He nodded his head violently, then shouted: 'They're after me!' and, jumping from the chair, ran to a corner of the room in an effort to escape.

"His agitation was so great that he lost control of the psychic and was gone.

"Immediately another spirit took possession of the psychic and in great excitement began to walk back and forth, exclaiming exultantly:

"I killed the dog! I killed the dog! There he lies!' - pointing at the floor toward the spot where White had lost control. 'The dog! I have been looking for a chance to kill him for several years, and got him at last! The dog!"

"I forced the spirit to sit down and learned that his name was Johnson.

"I killed Stanford White,' he boasted. 'He deserved death. He had trifled too long with our daughters ...'

"He was followed by a third entity, but this intelligence was aware of being a spirit, temporarily controlling a borrowed body.

"'I am Harry Thaw's father. Save my boy! Save my boy! He is not guilty. Harry will not be electrocuted.' (Later events proved this to be true)... 'He was obsessed by revengeful spirits when he killed Stanford White. I have tried to reach the external world by every possible avenue to tell the people that Harry is not insane, but that he is a psychic sensitive.'"

No one can be reasonably expected to accept without personal experience, statements of such crushing implications as the above, but Dr. Wickland is no maniac. He spent thirty years in this investigation, and through the same channels of approach many brilliant minds reached conclusions similar to his own.

Can it be that an immense volume of human experience should spell nothing but the word "humbug"?

Professor William James answered the question as follows:

"The spirits, if spirits there be, must indeed work under incredible complications and falsifications, but at least, if they are present, some honesty is left in the whole department of the universe which otherwise is run by pure deception. The more I realize the quantitative massiveness of the phenomenon and its complexity, the more incredible it seems to me that in a world all of whose vaster features we are in the habit of considering to be sincere at least, however brutal, this feature should be wholly constituted of insincerity."

Chapter 10: He who has Twins

Story of Rev. Francis Ward Monck

- Nandor Fodor -

A MAN who divides like a cell, becomes two separate full-grown beings, and then reabsorb the divided portion without a trace - could any biologist ever conceive a wilder dream?

Unique miracles are hardly known in psychic annals, but this is one of them. Were it not for the solemn testimony of the Rev. Thomas Colley, Archdeacon of Natal and Rector of Stockton, a respected and fearless clergyman, the miracle would have remained unnoted in psychic history. But as the venerable Archdeacon has placed the experience on public record the chronicle of the life story of the Rev. Francis Ward Monck, one time Minister of the Baptist Chapel at Earls Barton, a professional medium of amazing capacities would not be complete if it were omitted.

The event took place in a materialization séance on September 28th, 1877. It was noted down by the Archdeacon the same evening as follows:

"Dr. Monck, under control of 'Samuel', was by the light of the lamp - the writer not being a yard away from him - seen by all to be the living gate for the extrusion of spirit forms from the realm of mind into this world of matter; for standing thus plainly before us, the psychic or Spirit form was seen to grow out of his left side. First, several faces one after another of great beauty appeared, and in amazement we saw - and as I was standing close up to the medium, even touching him, I saw most plainly - several times a perfect face and form of exquisite womanhood partially issue from Dr. Monck about the region of the heart. Then, after several attempts, a full-formed figure, in a nebulous condition at first, but growing more solid as it issued from the medium, left Dr. Monck, and stood a separate individuality, two or three feet off, bound to him by a slender attachment as of gossamer, which at my request Samuel, the control, severed with the medium's left hand, and there stood embodied a spirit form of unutterable loveliness, robed in attire spirit-spun - a meshy web-work from no mortal loom, of a fleeciness inimitable, and of transfiguration whiteness truly glistening."

This amazing testimony was made public to create an impression in favour of Monck. No one needed it more urgently than he did, for he had just been sentenced to three months' imprisonment for defrauding people by pretending to be a medium. The sentence might have been much more severe but for the appearance in court of Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the famous naturalist. He deposed that he had seen Dr. Monck in a trance state "when there appeared a faint white patch on the left side of his coat, which increased in density and spread till it reached his shoulder; then there was a space gradually widening to six feet between it and his body; it became very distinct and had the outline of a woman in flowing white drapery. I was absolutely certain that it could not be produced by any possible trick."

Unfortunately there was unquestionable proof that in the instance under consideration Monck was fraudulent. At Huddersfield on November 3rd, 1876, a conjurer, named Lodge, suddenly demanded that the medium should be searched. Monck ran for safety, locked himself into his room upstairs and escaped through the window. The door was forced and a search was made. They found a pair of stuffed gloves which were apparently meant to serve as materialization paraphernalia. Nor was this the first case in which Monck was flagrantly caught in practising fraud. Sir William Barrett wrote of "a piece of white muslin on a wire frame with a black thread attached being used by the medium to simulate a partially materialized spirit".

With so incriminating a record against the accused it required considerable courage to come forward and state that a dreadful miscarriage of justice must have taken place. But this was precisely what Archdeacon Colley did.

He had just returned from India, too late to appear in court, but he had known Monck for years. He had lived with him, slept with him, and witnessed things that no mortal eyes had ever beheld; and he was so sure of his own observations that, in the course of a heated argument, he challenged J. N. Maskelyne and promised him a thousand pounds if he could duplicate Monck's materialization performance. Maskelyne accepted the

challenge, but his performance was declared to be a travesty of what was seen in seances with Monck. Maskelyne did not admit this, and sued the Archdeacon for the money. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace appeared in court once again. Mainly on his testimony judgment was entered against Maskelyne. The Archdeacon was awarded £75 and costs.

Had Monck a Jekyll and Hyde personality, the blending of an amazing medium and a brazen, unscrupulous trickster?

There is no doubt that the so-called physical phenomena of mediumship are of biological origin. Therefore, they need not be conditioned by morality. Further, mediumship as a profession is far less lucrative than conjuring. Yet there is not a single instance of a medium changing his role and setting himself up as a pastmaster of sleight-of-hand. (Nor has any magician ever claimed to be a medium.) This is a significant fact. It suggests that mediums are not captains of their ship, they cannot produce phenomena at will; their power is something which they do not understand. They cannot control it or direct it. They just lend themselves to it, to be used by it, more or less as simple instruments.

Monck was, in several respects, a unique medium. His materialization phenomena took place in bright daylight. In dark séances things were likely to happen of which he himself was afraid. Speaking before the Church Congress at Weymouth in October, 1903, Archdeacon Colley said:

"Often when I have been sleeping in the same bedroom with him for the near observation of casual phenomena during the night and, specially, that came through the dark I, on such occasions, would hold my hand over his mouth, and he would now and again be startled into wakefulness not unmixed with fear, for he could see the phantoms which I could not, when I had quietly put out the night-light - he would not sleep in the dark - which made him apprehensive of phenomena, physically powerful to an extraordinary degree."

Two years later the Archdeacon published a full account of his incredible experiences. He wrote:

"I publish these things for the first time, having meditated over them in silence for twenty-eight years, giving my word as clergyman for things which imperil my ecclesiastical position and my future advancement."

Under date of September 25th, 1877, he described the disappearance of "Lily", a beautiful spirit girl, as follows:

"As I brought my sweet companion close up to him (Monck), the gossamer filament again came into view; its attenuated and vanishing point being, as before, towards the heart. Greatly wondering, yet keen to observe, did I notice how, by means of this vapoury cord, the psychic figure was sucked back into the body of the medium. For like a waterspout at sea - funnel-shaped, or sand column such as I have seen in Egypt horizontal instead of vertical, the vital power of our medium appeared to absorb and draw in the spirit-form, but at my desire, so gradually that I was enabled quite leisurely thus closely to watch the process. For leaning against, and holding my friend with my left arm at his back and my left ear and cheek at his breast, his heart beating in an alarming way, I saw him receive back the lovely birth of the invisible spheres into his robust corporeal person. And as I gazed on the sweet face of the disintegrating spirit, within three or four inches of its features, I again marked the fair lineaments, eyes, hair and delicate complexion, and kissed the dainty hand as in process of absorption it dissolved and was drawn through the texture and substance of his black coat into our friend's bosom."

The Archdeacon once spoke to a materialized phantom before her extrusion was accomplished, and he saw recognition in her eyes and heard her whisper, during the psychic parturition, "So glad to see you."

On one occasion a minister friend of Monck materialized. By common consent the medium was carefully awakened. According to the Archdeacon:

"Dazed for a moment, and then most astonished, our aroused friend looked inquiringly at the materialized spirit form and jumping up from the sofa on which we had placed him, he excitedly rushed forward to his one-time fellow-student, shouting, 'Why, it is Sam,' and then

there was handshaking and brotherly greetings between the two. When both friends were about to speak at once there was a momentary impasse and neither seemed able to articulate; the medium's breath appearing to be needed by Samuel when he essayed to speak, while the materialized form was also checked in his utterance when the medium began to speak."

Even most hardened spiritualists gasp at this story. Nor is the tale of "Mahedi", Monck's giant Egyptian phantom, less amazing. He was so strong and solid that, we learn, he could lift the Archdeacon from his chair to the level of his shoulders apparently without effort. He reminded the chronicler of a mummy of gigantic proportions he once saw in some museum. On his first appearance through Monck, the Mahedi wore a kind of "metal skull cap, with an emblem in front which trembled and quivered and glistened, overhanging the brow. I was allowed to feel it, but there was little resistance to my fingers, and it seemed to melt away like a snow-flake under my touch, and to grow apparently solid again the moment after. For once (February 18th, 1878), by daylight, it was arranged as a most dangerous experiment that I should grasp the white-attired Egyptian and try to keep him from getting back to invisibility through the body of the medium. I was, by an invisible force, levitated at it seemed instantly some eighteen or twenty feet from my drawing-room door right up to where the medium stood whom, strangely and suddenly, wearing white muslin over his black coat, I found in my arms just as I had held the Mahedi. The materialized form had gone, and the psychic clothing that evolved with him from the left side of my friend must also have gone the same way with the speed of thought back to invisibility through the medium. But whence its substituted draper's stuff now on the body of our friend not wearing it an instant before?"

Here is material evidence which would have convicted Monck in court once again for fraud. But what about the story that goes with it? Colley was not quite the simpleton, miracle-monger and easy dupe that one would like to think him to be. Or was he dishonest? William Eglinton, another famous medium of the day, had no reason to think so, for the Archdeacon openly accused him of fraud when, having cut a piece of the robe and beard of a materialized figure, he found them fitting to perfection the muslin and beard which he discovered in Eglinton's portmanteau.

Even if Archdeacon Colley's case is put out of court as an unsolved mystery, what about the others? For a year Monck was retained for exclusive study by Hensleigh Wedgewood, the brother-in-law of Darwin, Stainton Moses, an Anglican clergyman-medium, and others interested in psychical research. Were these people all hypnotized? If so, what was the origin of the paraffin moulds of hands and feet which the phantoms left behind in William Oxley's experiments in Manchester in 1876?

And Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, co-discoverer with Darwin of the principle of natural selection, a man whose scientific fame was built on powers of observation, was he also a poor, deluded fool?

Listen to this account of his experiences described in a letter to the *Spectator*, October 6th, 1877, of a sitting in a private house with Monck:

Two slates, examined, cleaned and tied together by him were on the table, never out of sight. Monck asked the scientist to name a word he wished to be written on the slate inside. He named the word "God". Monck then asked how it should be written. He replied: "Lengthways of the slate and with a capital G." In a very short time the writing was heard on the slate. The medium's hands were convulsively withdrawn, Alfred Russel Wallace himself untied the cord and on opening the slates, found on the lower one the word in the manner he asked for.

Slate-writing is a doubtful phenomenon. There are at least a hundred ways to produce writing between slates by sleight-of-hand. But it is easier to suspect than to prove. And Dr. Wallace's experience was certified by E. T. Bennett, the Assistant Secretary of the Society for Psychical Research.

What are we then to conclude? We need not come to any conclusion at all. Most of these mediumistic mysteries have tried and baffled the best brains of the last and present century. Another Newton will have to come to illuminate with the light of his genius the hidden depths of the human soul and existence.

Chapter 11: The Ghost Story which Started Spiritualism Story of the Fox Sisters

- Nandor Fodor -

THIS THING Spiritualism which has been arraigned as striking at the very foundation of science and religion, how did it begin? Or did it have a beginning at all? Down the ages, amongst savages and civilized folk alike, psychic phenomena have always been in evidence. As a movement it certainly had a definite beginning. The age of animal magnetism prepared the soil, forerunners tempered the inclement mental atmosphere of the budding scientific age, and in 1848 in the little hamlet of Hydesville, New York, some phenomena (by no means unique in human history) kindled a fire from which the flame of a new reformation sprang and spread all over the world.

It was a ghost story which started all that follows: As ghost stories go it was nothing to cause the flesh to creep and the hair to stand on end, but it was rather unsettling, for the ghost in the case contrived to convey an intelligent message.

The house concerned in the story had an uncanny reputation. A former tenant left it rather hastily, but the family of John D. Fox experienced no serious discomfort until March, 1848. Then the trouble began. Raps, knocks and noises of shifting furniture at dead of night were heard. They grew in intensity, and on March 31st they kept the whole family awake. The head of the house got up and tried the sashes to see if they were loose. As he shook them raps seemed to reply. Little Kate, seven years old, noticed this, and snapped her fingers. Someone snapped back. Here was a game to delight the heart of a child. Kate clapped, there was an answering clap. Ten-years-old Margaret joined in the fun. She counted: one, two, three, striking her palms. Claps came in answer, until she grew afraid.

The parents had already concluded that the house must be haunted by some unhappy and restless spirit. They followed the lead of the children. They tested the knowledge and intelligence of the mysterious rapper. He rapped out the ages of all the Fox children, including one who had died. Rapping twice as the letters of the alphabet were called, he told a gruesome story. He was a pedlar, Charles B. Rosma by name. He was given hospitality in the house for the night. He had five hundred dollars on him. At midnight his host crept in and cut his throat with a butcher's knife. He dragged the body downstairs and buried it ten feet below in the cellar.

The accused was never brought to justice. He produced a certificate of good character from the town where he lived. There was no objective evidence against him. The testimony of the ghost could not be taken into court, the more so as the digging in the cellar produced no corpse. Only some hair and bones were found which a medical man pronounced to be human. But the skeleton was found fifty-six years later. A rough wall built a yard from the true wall of the cellar crumbled. The owner, on excavating, unearthed an almost entire human skeleton with a pedlar's tin box near the bones.

If this was the pedlar, whose were the bones in the cellar? Pedlars cannot afford two sets of bones. All spooks should know strange bones from their own. It certainly looked as if the ghost protested against the diggers' verdict, for the phenomena grew in violence. The sound of a death struggle, the gurgling of a throat, and the heavy dragging of a body across the room were heard night after night. The Foxes could not stand it; they left. The ghost stayed and entertained hundreds of curious people who flocked to the house of mystery.

Kate was sent to Auburn to her brother's house, and Margaret to her sister Leah, in Rochester. Raps broke out in both places. As it was thought that the ghost was left behind in Hydesville, it occurred to no one to ask questions for some time. When, at length, questions were put, a message was spelt out:

"Dear friends, you must proclaim this truth to the world. This is the dawning of a new era; you must not try to conceal it any longer. When you do your duty God will protect you and good spirits will watch over you."

With this message was Spiritualism born.

For the Fox sisters it meant a life of turmoil and vicissitudes. They became the centre of a storm which never abated in violence. They were tested, exposed and acknowledged time and again. The testers were as ignorant as the tested. Of the physiology of mediumship, of the dangers of its abuses, nothing was yet known. On one hand the Fox sisters were charged with imposture because there was a synchronous pulsation in their body when raps were heard; on the other hand they tried to exploit, in a hostile atmosphere, a gift which they did not understand. They were drained of nervous energy; they had little comprehension of the religious aspect of spiritualistic phenomena. They deteriorated and succumbed to drinking.

Margaret Fox had the good fortune to be wooed and wedded by Dr. Elisha Kane, the famous Arctic explorer. His love-letters were published after his death in 1857. In one of them he accuses her of "living in deceit and hypocrisy".

Leah Fox married a wealthy insurance man, named Underhill. Kate Fox came to England and became the wife of H. D. Jencken, a barrister-at-law. In 1888 the three sisters quarrelled disastrously. Kate, after the death of her husband, did not lead a very exemplary life. Leah attempted to deprive her of the custody of her two children. Margaret allied herself with Kate and swore vengeance to ruin her sister. This she did by sending a letter to the *New York Herald* denouncing Spiritualism and promising a complete exposure of the frauds which had been practised.

To keep her promise she gave a public lecture in the New York Academy of Music. There she confessed to being a fraud. She produced raps on the stage and explained that she could produce them at will. To make matters worse, Kate Fox joined her sister in New York and endorsed her revelations.

The consensus of opinion was that Spiritualism would never recover from this blow. But public opinion was again wrong. Apparently the pecuniary expectations of Margaret were not realized, or the revenge proved less sweet than she had anticipated. A year later she completely retracted her confession and explained that she was suffering from great financial difficulties and was under the effect of an excitement which almost upset her mental equilibrium. Of her moral stability there is no doubt. "For five dollars she would have denied her mother and would have sworn to anything" - wrote Dr. Isaac Funk, the well-known American publisher. And the irony of her confession was revealed before the Medico-Legal Society of New York in 1905 by Mrs. Mellen, a woman doctor who attended Margaret Kate Fox during her last days. She lived in a squalid room. She was unable to move hand or foot. There was not a closet in the place, nor any other hiding-place. Yet in answer to questions which Margaret Fox put to her spirit guides, knocks resounded on the walls, on the ceiling and on the floor.

But what is the importance of raps as a phenomenon? According to Professor Charles Richet, the world-famous physiologist of the Sorbonne:

"The reality of these raps is of primary importance and this phenomenon carries the implication of the whole of metapsychics. If it is established that mechanical vibrations can be produced in matter, at a distance, and without contact, and that these vibrations are intelligent, we have the truly far-reaching fact that there are in the universe human or non-human intelligences that can act directly on matter."

Have, then, the raps of the Fox sisters been definitely established?

Sir William Crookes had an opportunity for a full investigation with Katie Fox. He writes:

"It seems only necessary for her to place her hand on any substance for raps loud enough to be heard several rooms off. In this manner I have heard them in a living tree, on a sheet of glass, on a stretched iron wire, on a stretched membrane, a tambourine, on the roof of a cab and on the floor of a theatre. Moreover, actual contact is not always necessary. I have had these sounds proceeding from the floor, walls, etc., when the medium's hands and feet were held, when she was standing on a chair, when she was suspended from the ceiling, when she was enclosed in a wire cage and when she had fallen fainting on a sofa. I have heard them on a glass harmonium, I have felt them on my shoulder and under my own hand. I have heard them on a sheet of paper held between the fingers by a piece of thread passed through one corner."

The sounds were "delicate ticks, as with the point of a pin; a cascade of sharp sounds as from an induction coil in full work; detonations in the air; sharp, metallic taps; a cracking like that heard when a frictional machine is at work; sounds like scratching; the twittering as of a bird."

To Robert Dale Owen, son of Robert Owen, the great social reformer, we owe the description of a luminous instrument that produced the raps. He observed in a séance with Mrs. Underhill, on February 22nd, 1860:

"While I was looking intently at such a light, about as large as a small fist, it rose and fell, as a hammer would with which one was striking against the floor. At each stroke a loud rap was heard in connection. It was exactly as if an invisible hand held an illuminated hammer and pounded with it."

Such psychic lights may represent an initial stage of materialization. A record of four hundred sittings with Katie Fox in which human forms different from the medium were gradually built up was left by Charles F. Livermore, a rich banker of New York. The principal ghostly visitant was Estelle, the deceased wife of Charles Livermore. While Katie Fox was held by the hand, the phantom wrote out messages with a perfect reproduction of the characters she used on earth.

Under date of February 22nd, 1862, we find a unique description of the materialization of flowers. It reads:

"Appearance of flowers. Cloudy. Atmosphere damp. Conditions unfavourable. At the expiration of half an hour a bright light rose to the surface of the table, of the usual cylindrical form, covered with gossamer. Held directly over this was a sprig of roses about six inches in length, containing two half-blown white roses, and a bud with leaves. The flowers, leaves and stem, were perfect. They were placed at my nose and smelled as though freshly gathered; but the perfume in this instance was weak and delicate. We took them in our fingers and I carefully examined the stem and flowers. The request was made as before to be very careful. I noticed an adhesive, viscous feeling, which was explained as being the result of a damp, impure atmosphere. These flowers were held near and over the light, which seemed to feed and give them substance in the same manner as the hand. By raps we were told to 'notice and see them dissolve'. The sprig was placed over the light, the flowers dropped, and in less than one minute melted as though made of wax, their substance seeming to spread as they disappeared. By raps, 'see them come again'. A faint light immediately shot across the cylinder, grew into a stem; and in about the same time required for its dissolution, the stem and the roses had grown into created perfection. This was several times repeated, and was truly wonderful."

These are but a few samples of voluminous testimonies to the remarkable occurrences in the presence of the three Fox sisters. It would be too childish to suggest that two children, aged seven and ten respectively at the time of the Hydesville disturbances, organized a fraud which could flourish for eighty-five years.

Chapter 12: The Mouthpiece of one of the Three Wise Men Story of David Duguid

- Nandor Fodor -

A HISTORIAN is great if he can make the past live, if he can transport our fantasy back to an age which is no more. To us the past is dead. But once our own survival is established as a fact of science (and for many great minds already it is), it will be established for all those that preceded us in past ages. Could not they come back if they chose to do so, and could not we sit at their feet to re-learn the history of humanity from first-hand testimony?

A staggering possibility this, yet one which in Spiritualism is accepted as an actual occurrence. Not that definite and unquestionable proof could ever be claimed for the return of historic personalities. Proof is always personal. That element the long dead cannot supply. But their history may carry the stamp of truth, or, at least, it may make us wonder and dream. Particularly if it were an ignorant, uneducated man who efficiently trespassed on the preserves of professional dreamers in a setting which was, to say the least of it, highly unusual.

Such is the case of David Duguid, a Glasgow working man through whom it is claimed one of the Three Wise Men came back to tell, in the tones of a living voice, an entrancing story of his pilgrimage to the cradle of the Babe.

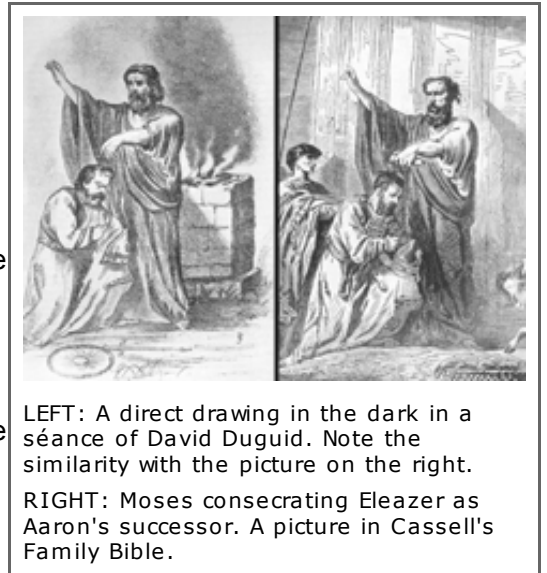
It came as a climax of unlooked-for miracles which comprised the whole scale of seance-room manifestations. Duguid was no professional medium. Curiosity led him to participate, in 1866, in table-sitting experiments at the house of H. Nisbet, the Glasgow publisher. During the sitting his hand shook and a cold current ran down his spine. When Nisbet's daughter, who was an automatic writer, placed her right hand on his left, it began to draw rough sketches of vases and flowers and then the section of an archway.

From such beginnings there developed one of the most powerful mediumships of the last century. The phenomena included mysterious raps, stirrings and intelligent action of inanimate objects, voices which from a husky tone became so thunderous that the house shook, the levitation of the medium, appearance of objects from closed rooms, mysterious lights, touches by phantom hands, showers of delicious perfumes and handling live coal with impunity.

All these phenomena were subsidiary to the Great Painting Mystery. In trance, with his eyes shut, Duguid executed sketches of great promise. The influence which claimed to be responsible for it felt hampered by Duguid's absolute lack of artistic education. On his suggestion, the medium took lessons at a Government School of Arts for four months. The knowledge so acquired might have assisted him in the large tableaux which he successively did. But it certainly sheds no light on the major mystery.

In total darkness, on little cards which the sitters brought along and marked, while the medium was held or tightly bound, invisible entities executed small oil paintings, sometimes in as short a time as thirty-five seconds. The noise of the brushes and the crinkling of the paper could be heard from well above the table. When finished, everything dropped, the paper invariably with painted side uppermost, wet and sticky. It showed miniature landscapes, one or more so finely executed that sometimes their merit was enhanced if viewed under a magnifying glass. Occasionally drawings were produced within a sealed envelope on a folded sheet of paper, on which all those present had placed their fingers. It was in such curious manner that illustrations were provided for the frontispiece of William Oxley's *Angelic Revelations*.

The invisible operators at first refused to disclose their identity. One of them assumed the name of Marcus Baker. He promised copies of his masterpieces which he had painted on earth. For four days, four hours at a time, the medium worked on a large painting. It was initialled J.R. From Cassell's *Art Treasures Exhibition*



it was recognized as "The Waterfall" by Jacob Ruisdale. The copy, however, was not exact. Some figures were omitted. The "control", on being questioned, said that those figures were added later by Bergheim. On consulting Ruisdale's biography, this was found to be true.

The second work of the invisible inspirer also claimed a famous name: that of Jan van Steen.

All was well and marvellous in the extreme until after the appearance of Hafed, Prince of Persia. His influence brought about a striking change in the medium. He appeared awe-struck and bent forward with hands clasped in the attitude of the deepest reverence. In forty-six sittings Nisbet, the publisher, took down the amazing story of a warrior prince of 1900 years ago who fought against an invading Arabian army, was later admitted to the order of the Magi, and ultimately rose to the office of the Arch Magus. He described the creeds and social life of ancient Persia, Tyre, Greece, Egypt, Judaea, Babylon, and many other long-perished civilizations, which he studied in his travels. The climax of his story was reached when he revealed that he conducted the expedition of the Three Wise Men to Judaea to the cradle of Jesus. He was summoned by his guardian spirit to go on the journey with two brother Magi and take rich gifts to the Babe. He described the youthful years of Jesus which were not chronicled in the Gospels, his travels with Him in Persia, India, and many other countries and the miracles which the young child performed. After the martyrdom of Jesus he became a Christian himself, met Paul in Athens, preached the gospel in Venice and Alexandria, and finally perished at the age of a hundred years in the arena at Rome.

The story, which proved to be a very good historical romance, was published in 1876 with illustrations of forty-five facsimile drawings and writings done by the spirit artists Ruisdale and Steen.

The spirit artists apparently had no respect for copyright. Arising from this, trouble arose which necessitated the withdrawal of the first edition of this amazing book. Instead of producing masterpieces as of old, Ruisdale and van Steen stooped to "lifting" illustrations from Cassell's *Family Bible*. Three full page and one half-page plates were found to be unquestionably identical, though with some elaboration. For instance, a ruined navel in the *Family Bible* appears in a restored condition in the book. Four more plates gave rise to suspicion and were expunged from the second edition. The suspicion was justified. Mr. E. T. Bennett, who was Assistant Secretary to the Society for Psychical Research, submitted an inscription of an Arabic doorway which came in direct writing, i.e., while the medium was held by the hand, to the expert examination of Mr. Stanley Lane-Pool. He found the text to read: "There is no conqueror but God," the characteristic motto of the Moorish Kings of Granada which occurs on all their coins and all over the Alhambra.

"But the writer of the direct card evidently had not the Alhambra, nor the Syrian Gateway in his mind, but Cassell's *Family Bible*. The engraver of the cut in the Bible, which you sent me," he wrote to Mr. Bennett, "made a muddle of the lower line of inscription under the lintel, not knowing Arabic, and the direct card exactly reproduces the engraver's blunders."

Those who would hastily conclude that Duguid exposed himself to a charge of fraud would show no understanding of the psychological complexities of these phenomena. The mind of Duguid, with his retentive subconscious memory, may have had a lot to do with all these sketches and writings. His hands certainly did not. This was exactly the line of defence taken by the "controls" when reproached and pressed for an explanation. They said that they took what they found in the medium's mind.

Wild and fantastic as the apology appears, it was borne out by other queer happenings. Visitors to David Duguid sometimes recognized in the "direct" paintings produced in their presence scenes which they were acquainted with in America and Australia and which the medium certainly could not have seen. Apparently, therefore, their memory, in some subtle manner, was also tapped.

Another puzzle of a possible similar explanation was furnished by a photographic demonstration. In the presence of sitters, David Duguid often exposed plates trusting to obtain supernormal markings or pictures. On several occasions a beautiful portrait was found on the plate of a Priestess who, according to the impression given to the medium, had been dedicated to the Temple of Venus in Cyprus. The enthusiasm for the charming lady, however, abated somewhat when Mme. Isabel de Steiger, F.T.S., discovered that the photograph was a copy of a German picture "Night", a print of which was in the possession of Mr. J. W. Brodie Innes, an Edinburgh solicitor. It is not at all impossible to conceive that in faking a spirit photograph from a foreign painting, Mr. Duguid should have the misfortune of selecting the very picture of which a print existed in Edinburgh. But a claim has been made for another solution. Experiences with other mediums

render it probable that somehow an access can be made to the buried store of memories. By a process totally unknown to us they become occasionally exteriorized on the sensitive plate.

Moreover, as a spirit photographer, David Duguid was duly tested by J. Traill Taylor, the editor of the *British Journal of Photography*. He sat with him in Glasgow and in London, obtained many "extras" under his own condition and stated in his report:

"The psychic figures behaved badly. Some were in focus, others not so; some were lighted from the right, while the sitter was so from the left; some were comely, others not so; some monopolized the major portion of the plate, quite obliterating the material sitters; others were as if an atrociously badly vignetted portrait, or one cut oval out of a photograph by a can-opener, or equally badly clipped out, were held up behind the sitter. But here is the point - not one of these figures which came out so strongly in the negative was visible in any form or shape to me during the time of exposure in the camera, and I vouch in the strongest manner for the fact that no one whatever had an opportunity of tampering with any plate anterior to its being placed in the dark slide or immediately preceding development. Pictorially they were vile, but how came they there?"

Fraud and genuine phenomena march in a queer procession through the lifetime of many a famous medium. Duguid was no exception. In 1905 at the age of seventy-three, after nearly 2,000 seances, he was caught in deliberate fraud in Manchester. He brought the spirit paintings ready-made to the seance-room and attempted to exchange them for the blank cards which the sitters provided. On being forcibly searched, the original cards were discovered in his trousers. His friends were stunned by the exposure. They offered the explanation that Duguid's powers, as is often the case, must have lapsed, and, prompted by vanity, he made a childish attempt to provide the phenomena the sitters desired.

The defence has a claim on our consideration. The psycho-physiological side of these problems is far too complex to pass a precipitate judgment. The qualification for mediumship is not stem morality but some constitutional or mental aptitude which escapes us in ordinary life, as there is no use for it. Rising from a lowly position and held up to admiration, mediums are inclined to lose their balance and do things incompatible with judgment or sanity. By supplanting the genuine with the spurious they may save much bodily discomfort and drain on their vitality. It is the line of least resistance. The majority of their sitters are miracle-mongers. The tendency to satisfy them with the least exertion is difficult to resist. This is now so well known that in the view of Dr. Gustave Geley, a famous French researcher, there is reason for severity in another direction. Bluntly put "When a medium tricks, the experimenter is responsible."

Chapter 13: The Chosen Vessel of Malachias the Prophet Story of the Rev. William Stainton Moses

- Nandor Fodor -

LET US suppose that survival is a fact: that after death, in accordance with the teachings of Spiritualism, we find ourselves in a real world with infinite possibilities of progress: further, that in course of time we shall be filled with commiseration for our brothers groping in darkness on earth. How would we set about teaching them the glorious truth?

First, we would try to impinge on matter direct. In that we might not succeed at all. Then we would try to influence certain people with a peculiar mental and physical equipment, people that could be impressed, that could see and hear, that could liberate certain forces with which we could operate on the plane of matter. But what if they would not believe their own eyes and ears? How would we prove that we were not phantasms of their disordered brain?

A display of greater power and knowledge than mortals possess would provide the only potent argument. Granting that we possessed such power and knowledge, that alone would open their minds to messages from us.

This was precisely the course adopted by a band of invisible communicators clustering from 1872-1881 around William Stainton Moses, M.A., an Anglican clergyman and Master of University College School, London. They asserted that a missionary effort to uplift the human race was being made in the spirit realms, and as he had the rarest mediumistic gifts and personal attainments he was selected as the chosen vessel. The communicators bore assumed names and, at first, refused to reveal their identity. Humanity was then wallowing in the deepest slough of materialism. They chose to prove themselves, simultaneously with the delivery of their high teaching, by a succession of miracles, and reserve the thunderbolt of their identity to a period when the medium might be prepared to face it.

The life of a quiet, unassuming clergyman became more amazing than any fairy tale. Stainton Moses was a man of narrow orthodoxy and dogmatism, a scathing critic of all claims to the supernatural. Circumstances steered him into an investigation of Spiritualism. In five months' time the table turned against him. He received evidence of the continuity of life which he could not put out of court. Moreover, he found himself the subject of visitation by powers that defied all the known laws of physics and chemistry alike.

He became a human dynamo in the hands of an invisible host. He appeared to generate a power which kept the room in constant vibration, which could move objects without contact, and could lift clean off the floor heavy tables that required two strong men to budge them. Like the man who lifted himself by his bootstraps, he rose in the air. In his note-book dated August, 1872, his sensations are described as follows:

"I was carried up. I made a mark on the wall opposite to my chest. I was lowered very gently until I found myself in my chair again. My sensation was that of being lighter than the air; no pressure on any part of the body, no unconsciousness or entrancement. From the position of the mark on the wall it is clear that my head must have been close to the ceiling. The ascent, of which I was perfectly conscious, was very gradual and steady, not unlike that of being in a lift, but without any perceptible sensation of motion other than that of feeling lighter than the atmosphere."

The power acted on matter in a most mysterious manner. According to a note dated August 28th, 1872:

"In the dining-room there was a little bell. We heard it commence to ring, and could trace it by its sound as it approached the door which separated us from it. What was our astonishment when we found that, in spite of the closed door, the sound drew nearer to us. It was evidently within the room in which we sat, for the bell was carried round the room, ringing loudly the whole time. After completing the circuit of the room, it was brought down, passed under the table, coming up close to my elbow. It was finally placed upon the table."

This was a demonstration that matter can interpenetrate matter. The claim is most often met with in "apports", i.e., the arrival of objects from somewhere outside to a place or room inside which they have no business to be. In Stainton Moses' case they were usually small articles coming through closed doors or walls and thrown upon the table mostly from a direction over the medium's head. But sometimes their origin was unknown.

Such objects included gems, pearls and semiprecious stones. They filled Stainton Moses with uneasiness. He could not disassociate them from the anxiety of their disconsolate owners.

Large globes of light of an unknown nature rose and floated in the air. They had a nucleus, which resembled the outlines of a human hand, and were enveloped in drapery that felt hard to the touch. They grew more vivid if the medium rubbed his hands together or on his coat. They could deliver distinct blows on the table. These luminous globes were succeeded by round discs of light which had a dark side, generally turned towards the medium. The light side gave answers to questions by flashes. On rarer occasions a column of light appeared six to seven feet high and an inch or more wide. It was of bright, golden hue and did not illuminate objects in the neighbourhood. For a minute a cross developed at its top; rays seemed to dart from it.

The strangest feature of these lights was that they could be seen through solid objects. If they appeared under a mahogany table they could be seen from above as well as if the top had been of glass. Sometimes as many as thirty lights were seen flying like comets in the room. They were associated mostly with spirit visitors, some of whom could slip in unbidden. Being touched by the light of an unwelcome visitor the skin of the medium's finger broke open and the joint swelled.

Music was heard when no instrument was present; also in the open air.

"We heard the fairy bells," writes Mrs. Speer, a friend of Stainton Moses, "playing in different parts of the garden, where we were walking; at times they sounded far off, seemingly playing at the top of some high elm trees, music and stars mingling together, then they would approach nearer to us, evidently following us into the séance-room, which opened on to the lawn. After we were seated the music still lingered with us, playing in the corner of the room and over the table round which we were seated. They played scales and chords by request with the greatest rapidity and copied notes sung by Dr. Speer. After Moses was in a trance the music became louder and sounded like brilliant playing on the piano! There was no instrument in the room."

Scents of musk, verbena, new-mown hay and an unfamiliar odour came down in showers during the sittings. Sometimes this occurred also in the open air. Stainton Moses believed that they were employed by his invisible attendants to harmonize conditions. No music was ever asked for by his "controls". A luminous haze appeared around the chair of a new sitter. The perfume issued from this or came sprinkling from the ceiling at the same time. There was a great peculiarity about these scents. They were circumscribed in space, confined to a belt or band beyond which they did not penetrate. It was possible to walk into it and out of it again. Within it the temperature was cool and the scent strong; outside, the temperature was decidedly warmer with no trace of scent. The edges of the belt were quite clearly marked. If conditions were unfavourable the scents were pungent, and most painful if they got into the eye. Unpleasant smells were also in evidence. Now and then the sitters were stunk out of the room by a horrible odour which impregnated everything for twenty four hours. Such smells were always associated with dark spirits.

Only a few select people, friends of Stainton Moses, and occasionally Sir William Crookes, witnessed these phenomena. For as a rule the invisible communicators strongly objected to the introduction of strangers. They had no wish to exhibit their power beyond convincing Moses and his friends of their supernormal claims. But the records are excellent. Dr. and Mrs. Stanhope Speer left numerous accounts and we have the original note-books of Stainton Moses, now preserved at the London Spiritualist Alliance. F. W. H. Myers, the great pioneer of psychical research, whose *Human Personality* was the foundation stone of a new cosmic philosophy, subjected them, after the death of Stainton Moses, to a minute analysis. His conclusion as to the phenomena was:

"That they were not produced fraudulently by Dr. Speer or other sitters. I regard as proved both by moral considerations and by the fact that they were constantly reported as occurring when Mr. Moses was alone. That Mr. Moses should have himself fraudulently produced them I

regard as both morally and physically incredible. That he should have prepared and produced them in a state of trance I regard both as physically incredible and also as entirely inconsistent with the tenor both of his own reports and those of his friends. I therefore regard the reported phenomena as having actually occurred in a genuinely supernormal manner."

Stainton Moses was no professional medium. His character and integrity were so high that Andrew Lang was forced to warn the advocates of fraud that "the choice is between a moral and physical miracle". Frank Podmore was almost the only critic who preferred to believe in a moral miracle rather than in a physical one. But for the physical miracle there was proof. Against the moral one everything militated.

Moreover, the invisible operators were fully aware that miracles cannot prove human survival. After all, the manifesting intelligence might be other than human, so they brought entities who claimed to have lived recently on earth and came to prove their identity.

The case of the Steam-Roller Suicide has become quite famous in spiritualistic literature. On February 10th, 1874, in a deep trance, the hand of Moses wrote: "I killed myself to-day." This was preceded by a very rude drawing, and then "Under steam-roller, Baker Street, medium passed," was written. The medium said "blood" several times and motioned something away. The spirit asked for prayer. On the following day Moses and Dr. Speer walked down Baker Street and asked the policeman on duty if any accident had occurred there. He told them that a man had been killed by the steam-roller at 9 a.m., and that he himself had helped to carry the body to Marylebone Workhouse.

The only flaw in the case was that the *Pall Mall Gazette* published a short account of the suicide the same evening and this may have been subconsciously seen by the medium. But even that flaw was completely eliminated in the Blanche Abercromby case. Her message was so intimate that Stainton Moses pasted down the edges of the corresponding pages in his notebook. They were opened almost twenty years later by F. W. H. Myers. The writing was in the lady's hand who died on that day. Both the lady's son and a handwriting expert established a complete identity.

No one was more suspicious of tricks of his own subconscious mind than Stainton Moses himself. He took extraordinary pains to prevent an admixture of his own thoughts.

"I cultivated the power," he writes, "of occupying my mind with other things during the time that the writing was going on, and was able to read an abstruse book and follow out a line of close reasoning while the message was written with unbroken regularity. Messages so written extended over many pages, and in their course there is no correction, no fault in composition, and often a sustained vigour and beauty of style."

Occasionally, even his hand was dispensed with. Messages were written on sheets of paper deposited on the floor under the table when no one could have done the writing. Sometimes they grew visibly, even in colours, before the eyes of the medium without the use of pencil or chalk.

The famous *Spirit Teachings* are in the form of dialogue, i.e., in answer to questions which Moses addressed to his invisible interlocutors. Their tone towards him was habitually courteous and respectful. But occasionally it was biting in criticism. This was one of the reasons why Moses was unwilling to allow the inspection of his notebooks during his lifetime. The teachings were couched in tones of a lofty morality and high spiritual purpose. They probed deep into the problems of existence and man's future destiny. They meant not to be a new dispensation but an interpretation and purification of the old one. The beings who signed themselves by such names as Imperator, Preceptor, Prophet, Rector, Vates, Prudens, etc., desired to do for Christianity what Jesus did for Judaism. Imperator, their leader, who always signed with a cross and S.D. (Servus Dei), claimed to be communing, through Preceptor, with Jesus himself. His presence always inspired reverence and awe. On being pressed for his identity on July 6th, 1873, Imperator tore off the veil in such dramatic words:

"Know, then, that I was incarnated upon your earth in those terrible days of desolation which succeeded the return of God's people from the land of Persia under Nehemiah: days when the priests were corrupt and corrupted their people, when the service of God was neglected and profaned; and when the people were fast losing all direct consciousness of the presence of God's Messenger with them. In those days I lived and spake with human utterance the prophetic message, even as now I convey through you a fuller and clearer knowledge of the

same God whom I then revealed. When Nehemiah stood forth to guide the people and bring them back to God, I, Malachias, the Angel of Jehovah, the Messenger of God as I was called, stood by his side and prophesied of God's judgment."

The revelation had a crushing effect on Stainton Moses. He was no fool, he had great intellectual attainments, a keen and well-balanced mind. Biblical characters, ancient sages and philosophers (Malachias, Elijah, Daniel, St. John the Baptist, Solon, Plato, Seneca, etc.), communicating through him! Nothing could have sounded more preposterous. He fought against their claim with a stubborn persistence and was again and again reproved for his unbelief. He pointed out the impossibility of proving the identity of ancient spirits. Imperator answered that statements incapable of proof should be accepted as true on the ground that others which could be tested had been verified. The argument was flawless. Moses at last capitulated. In his Introduction to *Spirit Teachings* he wrote:

"Judged as I should wish to be judged myself, they were what they pretended to be."

To the teachings Stainton Moses was, for a long time, bitterly opposed. In the light of his rigid orthodoxy they appeared almost blasphemous. But nothing demonstrates better the influence which they exercised over his age than that almost the whole of these teachings is now embodied in liberalized Christianity. A large proportion of the Anglican Church, modernists and non-conformists, accept them now as beyond dispute.

Imperator and his band accomplished their purpose. It matters not whether the personal agency of Malachias and his helpers is evidentially admissible or not. Moses himself wavered and showed hesitation after the miracles ceased. What alone matters is their value, which proved them worthy of the source from which they claimed to emanate.

Chapter 14: **She Convinced Sir Oliver Lodge of Survival** **Story of Mrs. Eleonore E. Piper**

- Nandor Fodor -

HUMAN NATURE is such that it recoils from facing momentous issues. From the close of the last century onward a number of famous scientists announced to the world that after a personal investigation, extending over a great number of years, they found human survival an established fact of science. The world apparently is not ready to believe that religion need no more be a matter of hope and faith, but that it is a matter of knowledge. It prefers to think that even the most famous scientist may, in some respects, go off his head. And if the famous scientist suffered personal bereavement they deduce from this fact a "proof" that his emotional nature overrode his reason. Protests against this attitude availed nothing. In vain did Sir Oliver Lodge write in his famous book *Raymond*:

"My conclusion has been gradually forming itself for years... But this event has strengthened and liberated my testimony."

He testified to a stupendous reality. It was a way of escape for his opponents to believe that grief over the loss of his son might have affected his critical faculty. The fact that his views of demonstrated survival were announced as early as 1909 was conveniently forgotten. The name of the remarkable woman who brought him this conviction, to whom science owes an undischarged debt of gratitude, is not even known to the world.

Some day a monument will be erected to Mrs. Leonore E. Piper. She is still with us. A woman of sterling character and courage, on whom Prof. William James, the greatest modern philosopher, was willing to stake his reputation "for wisdom or folly to stand or fall"; who converted Dr. Richard Hodgson, the greatest fraud-hunter in the history of psychical research ("a veritable Saul persecuting the Christians", as he was described) to a belief in human survival; who convinced Prof. J. H. Hyslop of Columbia University that "there is a future life and persistence of personal identity", a declaration which cost him his professional chair; who reduced psychologists to a state of bewilderment all over the world and who, for a period of over forty years, endured every kind of scrutiny, I might say vivisection, which scientific ingenuity could devise to disprove the reality of an invisible world.

It spells little to say that she was a trance medium. To the average man that only means a person of doubtful respectability who spends the greater part of her life talking gibberish in a state of sleep. But to psychical research it means that she becomes a human automaton, an organism which her ego ceases to inhabit, and which is temporarily possessed of beings that call themselves spirits of the dead.

What could be more provoking to physiology than the actual description of this preposterous process. It was thus summarized to Dr. Hodgson:

"We all have bodies composed of luminiferous ether enclosed in our flesh and blood bodies. The relation of Mrs. Piper's ethereal body to the ethereal world in which communicators claim to dwell is such that a special store of energy is accumulated in connection with her organism, and this appears to them as "light". Mrs. Piper's ethereal body is removed by them and her ordinary body appears as a shell filled with this "light"... If the communicator gets into contact with the light and thinks his thoughts, they tend to be reproduced by movements in Mrs. Piper's organism... When Mrs. Piper is in ill health the light is feebler and the communications tend to be less coherent. It also gets used up during a sitting and when it gets dim there is a tendency to incoherence even in otherwise clear communicators. In all cases, coming into contact with this light tends to produce bewilderment, and if the contact is continued too long, or the light becomes very dim, the consciousness of the communicator tends to lapse completely."

It appears that the proceedings are in expert hands. The so-called "controls" succeed, in spite of inconceivable difficulties, in efficiently handling an alien organism for earthly manifestations. This is how "Pelham", one of Mrs. Piper's other-world supervisors, explained the position:

"In order to reveal themselves to you the spirits put themselves in an environment that discommodates them a good deal. They are like persons who have received a blow on the head and are in a state of semi-delirium. They must be calmed, encouraged, assured that their idea will immediately be of great importance... In order to speak with you it is necessary for me to re-enter the body and there dream. Hence you must pardon my errors and the lacunae in my speech and memory."

The marvel of Mrs. Piper's case was that her body responded to the invaders exceedingly well. She could obtain three simultaneous communications: writing with both hands and speaking at the same time. The dramatic activity of the hand was a remarkable phenomenon. It was full of intelligence and could be described as acting more as a person than a hand. Dr. Hodgson reported that at a sitting where a lady was engaged in a profoundly personal conversation with the control concerning her relations "the hand was seized very quietly and, as it were, surreptitiously, and wrote a very personal communication to myself purporting to come from a deceased friend of mine and having no relation whatsoever to the sitter; precisely as if a caller should enter a room where two strangers to him were conversing, but a friend of his is also present, and whisper a special message into the ear of the friend without disturbing the conversation."

The first point on which the average inquirer wishes to be satisfied is the integrity of the medium. As to this, we have the testimony of Mrs. Piper's discoverer, Prof. William James. For the first eighteen months he kept her under personal supervision. He hypnotized her and found the condition of her trance and hypnotic sleep radically different. He found no signs of thought transference either in the hypnotic condition or immediately after it. Would he have declared in his report to the Society for Psychical Research without taking the utmost pains:

"And I repeat again what I said before, that, taking everything that I know of Mrs. Piper into account, the result is to make me feel as absolutely certain as I am of any personal fact in the world that she knows things in her trances which she cannot possibly have heard in her waking state, and that the definite philosophy of her trances is yet to be found".

It was as the result of Prof. James's representation to the Society for Psychical Research in London that Dr. Richard Hodgson was sent over to America and initiated there the most famous period of mediumistic investigation. He started by engaging detectives to watch Mrs. Piper and see if she made any attempt to obtain information normally. On days of sittings he forbade her to read the morning papers. He introduced all sitters under the pseudonym "Smith". He improvised sittings for the benefit of chance callers of whose very existence Mrs. Piper could not have been aware. For fifteen years he was ready to pounce upon the least suspicious circumstance. And in later years he ruefully declared more than once that his *amour propre* had never quite recovered from the shock it received when he found himself forced to accept unreservedly the genuineness of the Piper phenomena. For in his second report to the S.P.R. in 1897, he stated:

"At the present time I cannot profess to have any doubt that the chief communicators to whom I have referred in the foregoing pages are veritably the personages that they claim to be, that they have survived the change we call death, and that they have directly communicated with us whom we call living, through Mrs. Piper's entranced organism."

The terror of fraudulent mediums, the hardest sceptic that ever entered the arena of psychical research, the man who exposed Mme. Blavatsky in India became a spiritualist. His outlook upon life underwent a complete change. He refused remunerative offers from universities and colleges and lived happily on an inadequate salary in one room in Boston for the rest of his life. He was in touch with a reality of which he did not dream, the fullness of which only the personalities of Mrs. Piper's last controls could adequately unfold.

"Phinuit", her first control, a soi-disant French doctor of Metz, was a dubious personality. Prof. N. S. Shaler, in a letter to William James, calls him a "preposterous scoundrel". He had an exclusive reign until the advent of "Pelham". He was George Pellew, a lawyer and writer, a friend of Dr. Hodgson. He died accidentally in 1892 and came back through Mrs. Piper to keep his promise. He talked with 130 persons, of which thirty had previously known him. He addressed each of them in the tone and manner which he used in his lifetime. In 1897 a great change had taken place. The Imperator group arrived on the scene. They suppressed Phinuit and relegated Pelham to the role of a minor communicator. They professed to be the same august personalities whose chosen vessel Stainton Moses was: Malachias, the prophet and his faithful band. The tone of communication assumed a dignity and loftiness of expression and a quasi-religious character which it had heretofore entirely lacked. The group exercised a tremendous spiritual

influence over the life of all those who came in contact with its members. Many sitters prayed to Emperor for comfort and guidance as one would pray to a favourite saint. Even Dr. Hodgson, a man of a keen sense of humour, always buoyant and cheerful, would become grave when the name of Emperor was mentioned. In the closing years of his life, alone in his room, he received direct communications from these august beings. They were of a convincing nature and of a revelatory character. He never allowed anyone to enter his room for fear of disturbing its "magnetic" influence, and none but his most intimate friends knew why Dr. Hodgson lived like a saint.

In 1889 Mrs. Piper paid her first visit to England. She was isolated more completely from the world than if she had been taken to a fever hospital. Sir Oliver Lodge had her down to his house in Liverpool. His wife engaged an entirely new staff of servants. All her correspondence passed through the hands of her host, and she could not even go on a shopping expedition alone. Yet this extraordinary woman revealed the most extraordinary familiarity with the lives of all the strange people who were brought to her. Her control, the "rascally" Phinuit, showed an extraordinary familiarity with the boyhood days of two of Lodge's uncles. Lodge thereupon sent a professional inquiry agent to Barking where they lived to see how much he could find out on the scene. The agent wrote:

"Mrs. Piper has certainly beat me. My inquiries in modern Barking yield less information than she gave. Yet the most skilful agent could have done no more than secure the assistance of the local record keepers and the oldest inhabitants living."

Lodge's first report, issued in 1890, was cautiously restricted to the conclusion:

1. That Mrs. Piper's attitude is not one of deception.
2. No conceivable deception on the part of Mrs. Piper can explain the facts.

But 19 years later in his *Survival of Man* he admitted:

"The old series of sittings with Mrs. Piper convinced me of survival for reasons which I should find it hard to formulate in any strict fashion, but that was their distinct effect. They also made me suspect - or more than suspect - that surviving intelligences were in some cases consciously communicating - yes, in some few cases consciously; though more usually the messages came, in all probability, from an unconscious stratum, being received by the medium in an inspirational manner analogous to psychometry.

"The hypothesis of surviving intelligence and personality - not only surviving but anxious and able with difficulty to communicate - is the simplest and most straightforward, and the only one that fits all the facts."

Few people will remember the famous Faunus message of Mrs. Piper which warned Sir Oliver of his impending bereavement during the war. On August 8th, 1915, in the form of a message from the spirits of F. W. H. Myers and Dr. Hodgson, it came abruptly as follows:

"Now, Lodge, while we are not here as of old, i.e., not quite, we are here enough to give and take messages. Myers says you take the part of the poet, and he will act as Faunus. Faunus. Myers. Protect: he will U.D. (understand). What have you to say, Lodge? Good work, ask Verrall, she will also U.D. Arthur says so."

The message reached Sir Oliver Lodge from America early in September, 1915. On September 17th the War Office notified him that his son Raymond was killed in action on September 14th. But before the blow fell Sir Oliver inquired from Mrs. Verrall, lecturer in classics at Newnham College: "Does the poet and Faunus mean anything to you? Did one protect the other?" She replied at once that "the reference is to Horace's account of his narrow escape from death, from a falling tree, which he ascribes to the intervention of Faunus".

According to Rev. M. A. Bayfield:

"Faunus lightened the blow; he does not say 'turned it aside'. As bearing on your terrible loss, the meaning seems to be that the blow would fall, but would not crush; it would be lightened

by the assurance, conveyed afresh to you by a special message from the still living Myers that your boy still lives."

F. W. H. Myers was a well-known classical scholar. The message was of the type which he would have planned so as to prepare Lodge and be beyond the reach of the medium's mind.

Mrs. Piper's life is too full of amazing happenings and incidents of scientific importance to be adequately dealt with in a single chapter. Never before has a medium made out so strong and unanswerable a case for the reality of an unseen world; and never since has the world of science been able to explain away that mountain of strictly scientific evidence which her life-work represents.

Chapter 15: The Medium of Kings and Kings of Mediums Story of D. D. Home

- Nandor Fodor -

THE LATE W. T. Stead was the first journalist to whom the Czar of All the Russians (Nicholas II) granted a newspaper interview. According to his own story, after a half an hour's conversation, the publicist forgot himself and rose saying: "I must not detain your Majesty any longer."

Around the seventies a less nonchalant but similarly unprecedented attitude was shown towards Alexander II of Russia by another Englishman, D. D. Home, the famous medium. He himself writes of it in *Incidents in My Life* with an engaging naivety:

"On reaching St. Petersburg, I was honoured by a kind invitation to be received by the Emperor, which I was obliged to decline, not being *in power* at the time, and His Majesty having most graciously sent to me to say that under any circumstances he would be pleased to see me, I excused myself on the plea of having so much to attend to, previous to my marriage."

D. D. Home was such an extraordinary man that the Czar forgave him the rebuff. Indeed, if we can believe a letter of Prince Emil Sayn Wittgenstein, his Imperial Majesty's late aide-de-camp, to Mrs. Hardinge Britten in 1876, the Emperor and most of his household were completely converted to Spiritualism.

"Since Mr. D. D. Home's first visit in - I think - 1861," he wrote, "His Majesty has never doubted the truth of spirit communion, and the rich presents and special favour he has bestowed on Mr. Home is proof positive of the royal acceptance of his mediumship."

In France rumours were also rife that Louis Napoleon, as a result of D. D. Home's visits to the Tuilleries, became a believer in Spiritualism. The Duke de Morny told the Emperor that he felt in duty bound to contradict the rumour. To which the Emperor replied:

"Quite right, but you may add when you speak on the subject again that there is a difference between believing a thing and having proof of it, and that I am certain of what I have seen."

What the Emperor saw was probably the most amazing experience of his life. When he received Home for the first time his and the Empress's unspoken thoughts were replied to, and the Empress was touched by a materialized hand in which, from a defect in one of the fingers, she recognized that of her late father. In the second séance the room was shaken, heavy tables were lifted and glued down to the floor by an alteration of their weight. At the third séance a phantom hand appeared above the table, lifted a pencil and wrote the single word "Napoleon" in the autograph of Napoleon I.

There were other crowned heads who treated D. D. Home with favour: the King of Bavaria, the German Emperor, the Queen of Holland, and the King of Naples. Were they, with hundreds of other famous people, suddenly attacked by a form of insanity which caused them to believe in things incredible, or did they witness genuine phenomena?

That a roomful of intelligent people who are quite sane in other respects should concur, to the minutest particulars, in the details of the occurrences of which they were supposed to be the witnesses, seemed to Sir William Crookes more incredible than the facts which they attested. From personal observation he wrote that the phantom hand "is not always a mere form, but sometimes appears perfectly life-like and graceful, the fingers move, the flesh apparently as human as that of any in the room. At the wrist, or arm, it becomes hazy and fades off into a luminous cloud." To the touch the hand sometimes appears icy cold and dead, at other times warm and life-like. He has seen a luminous cloud hover over a heliotrope, break a sprig



The first flashlight photograph of human levitation: Amadee Zuccarni in the air.

off and carry it to a lady, he has seen a finger and thumb pick the petals from a flower in Home's button-hole and lay them in front of several persons sitting near him.

"Moreover, on one occasion," writes Crookes, "I have retained one of these hands in my own, firmly resolved not to let it escape. There was no struggle or effort to get loose, but it gradually seemed to resolve itself into vapour and faded in that manner from my grasp."

He also saw complete but transparent ghostly forms.

"In the dusk of the evening, during a séance with Mr. Home at my house, the curtains of a window about eight feet from Mr. Home were seen to move. A dark, shadowy, semi-transparent form, like that of a man, was seen by all present standing near the window, waving the curtain with his hand. As we looked, the form faded away and the curtains ceased to move."

Once the semi-transparent ghost, holding an accordion in his hand and playing continuously, came up to Mrs. Crookes.

"As the figure approached," she writes, "I felt an intense cold, and as it was giving me the accordion I could not help screaming. The figure seemed to sink into the floor, leaving only the head and the shoulders visible, still playing the accordion, which was then about a foot off the floor."

After manifestations of so astounding a character it seems almost a paltry thing to speak of a heavy dining-table which Crookes saw rise between a few inches and one and a half feet off the floor under special circumstances which rendered trickery impossible; or, again, to listen to Lord Lindsay's following testimony:

"I had one hand on his chair and the other on the piano, and while he played both his chair and the piano rose about three inches and then settled down again."

A man who could not be kept down on earth! Crookes knew of at least a hundred instances of his rising from the ground. He believed the story of his floating out of the third story window of Lord Adare's house in Victoria Street in the presence of three witnesses⁽¹⁾ because he himself had to acknowledge:

"On several occasions Home and the chair on which he was sitting at the table rose off the ground. This was generally done very deliberately, and Home sometimes tucked up his feet on the seat of the chair and held up his hands in full view of all of us. On such an occasion I have got down and seen and felt that all four legs were off the ground at the same time, Home's feet being on the chair. Less frequently the levitating power was extended to those sitting next to him. Once my wife was thus raised off the ground in her chair."

(1) See Chapter 1.

There is almost no end to the miracles which D. D. Home produced for Crookes. Under the strictest test conditions he saw:

"a solid luminous body, the size and nearly the shape of a turkey's egg float noiselessly about the room, at one time higher than anyone present could reach on tiptoe, and then gently descend to the floor. It was visible for more than ten minutes, and before it faded away it struck the table three times with a sound like that of a hard solid body. During this time the medium was lying back, apparently insensible, in an easy chair. I have seen luminous points of light darting about and settling on the heads of different persons. I have had questions answered by the flashing of a bright light a desired number of times in front of my face. I have had an alphabetic communication given me by luminous flashes occurring before me in the air, whilst my hand was moving about amongst them."

Lord Adare, the father of the present Lord Dunraven, had seen the extended hand of Home become quite luminous. On another occasion his clothes commenced to shine. Once the top of his head glowed with light as if a halo surrounded it. On Home's request he asked the starlike lights in the name of the Father, and the

Son and the Holy Ghost if that was the work of God. "I repeated the words very earnestly," he says, "the light shone out, making three little flashes, each one about a foot higher above the floor than the preceding."

Crookes constructed a wire cage which he connected into an electric circuit and placed under the table so that it just fitted. An accordion which Home placed in the cage played by its own accord floating in the air. Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the great naturalist, writes of the same experience in *My Life*:

"I was invited to go under the table while an accordion was playing, held in Home's hand, holding the instrument which moved up and down and played a tune without any visible cause. He then said: 'Now I will take away my hand,' which he did; but the instrument went on playing, and I saw a detached hand holding it while Home's two hands were seen above the table by all present."

The accordion not only played, but it played exquisite music. According to Robert Bell's anonymous article, "Stranger than Fiction", in the *Cornhill Magazine*, August, 1860:

"The air was wild and full of strange transitions, with a wail of the most pathetic sweetness running through it. The execution was no less remarkable for its delicacy than its Powers. When the notes swelled in some of the bold passages, the sound rolled through the room with an astounding reverberation; then gently subsiding, sank into a strain of divine tenderness." The experience was the same when Bell held the accordion in his own hand, with full light upon it; during the loud and vehement passages it became so difficult to hold, in consequence of the extraordinary power with which it was played from below, that he was obliged to grasp the top with both hands."

On Easter evening, 1866, in S. C. Hall's, the well known art critic's home, to quote from a well-attested experience from Home's biography:

"First we had simple, sweet, soft music for some minutes; then it became intensely sad; then the tramp, tramp as of a body of men marching mingled with the music, and I exclaimed 'The March to Calvary'. Then three times the tap-tapping sound of a hammer on a nail (like two metals meeting). A crash, and a burst of wailing which seemed to fill the room, followed; then there came a burst of glorious triumphal music, more grand than any of us had ever listened to, and we exclaimed, 'The Resurrection'. It thrilled all our hearts."

If for miracles all that is not sufficient we may add that at the very least 50 people had seen D. D. Home grow in stature to a maximum of eleven inches. Lord Lindsay observed "the top of the hipbone and the short ribs separate". Home looked as if he had been pulled up by the neck. He also grew in breadth, he could elongate his arms and legs, and also shorten them, it seems, so that the limbs "felt shrunk and withered".

Physiologists will, of course, say that the thing is a total impossibility. But it is no less impossible for a human being to handle live coal with impunity or bury his face in a blazing coal fire. Yet Home did it. Writes Lord Adare in *Experiences in Spiritualism with D. D. Home*:

"Having apparently spoken to some spirit, he went back to the fire, and with his hand stirred the embers into a flame; then kneeling down he placed his face among the burning coals moving it about as though bathing it in water. Then, getting up, he held his finger for some time in the flame of the candle."

Crookes and Sir William Huggins, the astronomer, former president of the Royal Society, had seen Home improvising a furnace in his hand by covering a piece of red hot coal, of the size of an orange, with his left hand, and blowing on it until it was nearly white-hot, and "then drew my attention," continues Crookes, "to the lambent flame which was flickering over the coal and licking round his fingers; he fell on his knees, looked up in a reverent manner, held up the coal in front, and said: 'Is not God good? Are not his laws wonderful?'"

People who had faith could take the coal from Home without injury. Mrs. S. C. Hall saw a burning coal placed on the head of her husband. Home drew up his white hair over the coal into a sort of pyramid, the coal still showing red beneath the hair.

No man was more sought after by the great ones of the day than D. D. Home. Dumas, *pere*, considered him a friend. He was his marriage witness in St. Petersburg, the Czar's Chamberlain being another. When Emperor Alexander II "forgot" to ask him on inviting Home, he consoled himself with the grandiose remark: "There are many crowned heads in Europe, but there is only one Alexander Dumas."

Thackeray considered Home a genuine mystery; Lord Bulwer-Lytton looked up to him; Robert Chambers, the author and publisher, Dr. John Ashburner, one of the Royal physicians, Dr. John Elliotson, F.R.S., some time president of The Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society (the model of Dr. Goodenough in Thackeray's "Pendennis"), Alfred Russel Wallace, Prof. Augustus de Morgan, the famous mathematician, came over to Spiritualism. Faraday refused investigation because Home was disinclined to acknowledge in advance "that the phenomena, however produced, were ridiculous and contemptible". Tyndall and Carpenter would not condescend. Huxley, the great, was "not interested". With two great men of the day Home came into open conflict and emerged with honours. Sir David Brewster declared, after a sitting in the company of Lord Brougham, that "this upsets the philosophy of 50 years". It also upset his judgment, for when the statement was published in the Press he made an indignant denial and set down all the phenomena to imposture. In the heated newspaper controversy which followed he was definitely worsted, and in 1869, in *The Home Life of Sir David Brewster*, his own daughter proved him to be in the wrong by printing the original note on his experience from his private diary.

Robert Browning wrote a prose poem, *Sludge the Medium*. It was generally thought to refer to Home, and did great harm to his reputation. Browning's own experiences gave no justification for it. It was "a blot on the Browning 'scutcheon'" - as Mrs. Sarah Whitman, the American poetess, remarked. It might be true, as G. K. Chesterton says in his Browning biography, that the poet "did not dislike spiritualism but spiritualists". His wife was one of them. That was mainly why the subject of Spiritualism was tabooed in the Browning home.

Home was no professional medium. He was never exposed, never even specifically accused. For his sittings he accepted no payment. He lived precariously on the hospitality of his friends. Once he became an international figure, and the subject of a debate in the House of Commons. He made frequent visits to Italy. Rumour arose among the peasants that he was a necromancer who administered the Sacrament of the Church to toads in order to raise the dead by spells and incantations. An attempt was made on his life, and he was officially warned of his sinister reputation. Nine years later he was expelled from Rome. As he claimed the protection of the English Consul his expulsion was discussed in the House of Commons, but no representation was resolved upon.

A few years later in England he was the central figure of a scandalous law-suit. A certain Mrs. Lyon, a wealthy widow, took a fancy to Home, and proposed to adopt him if he added her name to his own. Home assented. Mrs. Lyon transferred £60,000 to his account, and drew up a will in his favour. Later she repented her action and sued for the recovery of the money on the basis that she was influenced by spirit communications from her dead husband. Home, on the point of leaving for Germany, was arrested. He was liberated the following day on depositing in the Court of Chancery the deeds relating to the £60,000. Before the Court the onus of proof was put on the defendant. Though Mrs. Lyon's statements were found "so perversely untrue that they have embarrassed the court to a great degree", judgment was entered against Home.

Ugly rumours were circulated in the Press. One of them being that Mrs. Lyon had a false left hand and Home made her believe that he could create life in the artificial limb. It had no more basis than the fantastic explanations of his phenomena. In Russia they said that he had a great number of cats to sleep with and drew from their body electricity. In Paris they whispered that he carried about a trained monkey in his pocket to twitch dresses and shake hands during the séance. But the most ingenious explanation came from an old woman in America, who said:

"Lor, sirs, it's easy enough, he only rubs himself all over with a gold pencil first."

Chapter 16: Reading the Newspaper before it is Printed

Story of Mrs. Osborne Leonard

- Nandor Fodor -

NO EDITOR could wish for a better proof of supernormal knowledge than a definite forecast, by an outsider, of the layout of his own paper at a time when it is yet in the limbo of things to come. A thousand and one things may happen during the making up of a newspaper up to the last moment. To foresee in the early afternoon paragraphs that are not yet set up in the column, and the position which they will occupy next day - if there is anything beyond human knowledge this is one of the nearest things to it!

Yet this feat of divination was achieved. The evidence for it is unassailable. We have the personal asseveration of the Rev. Charles Drayton Thomas, of Bromley, Kent, an eminent Methodist clergyman psychical researcher. We have corroboration in the information which - immediately after his sittings with Mrs. Osborne Leonard, the foremost trance medium of our day - Mr. Drayton Thomas posted to the Society for Psychical Research. Thus it was proved that at an hour when neither the editor nor the compositor could tell what text would appear in the next edition in the column mentioned, the manifesting intelligence (who claimed to be the deceased father of the experimenter) could invade the offices of *The Times* and make a forecast that was beyond human calculation.

As told by the Rev. Charles Drayton Thomas in *Some Recent Evidence for Survival* (Pp. 131-179.), the following tests were given on February 13th, 1920:

1. The first page of the paper. in column two, and near the top the name of a minister with whom your father was friendly at Leek. (Perks was found, a name which was verified from an old diary.)
2. Lower in this column, say one quarter down, appear his name, your own, your mother's and that of an aunt; all four within the space of two inches. (John and Charles were correctly found, then came the name Emile Sauret, which presumably suggested Emily and Sarah, his aunt and mother.)
3. Near these the word "Grange". (Not found.)
4. In column one, not quite half-way down, is a name which is your mother's maiden name or one very like it. (The maiden name was Dore, the name found Dorothea.)
5. Somewhat above that is named a place where your mother passed some years of her girlhood. (Hants. Correct. Shirley, where she spent her girlhood, being in Hampshire.)
6. Close to the foregoing is a name, which suggests an action one might make with the body in jumping. (Cummock, a bad pun: come knock.)
7. Towards the bottom of column one is named a place where you went to school. (Lincolnshire. Correct.)
8. In the vicinity is mentioned a - shall I say teacher, other than a schoolmaster - of ours whom you will remember well. (Watts and Joseph correct.)
9. There is a word close by which looks to your father like Cheadle. (Not found.)
10. Higher in column one, say two-thirds down, is a name suggesting ammunition. (Found the ecclesiastical title Canon.)
11. Between that and the teacher's name is a place-name. French, looking like three words hyphenated into one. (Braine-le-Chateau.)

12. About the middle of this page, the middle both down and across, is a mistake in print; it cannot be right. Some wrong letters inserted or something left out, some kind of mistake just there. (The word "page" printed imperfectly: "Paae".)

Out of twelve items in this test two entirely failed. The others were correct. The forecast came at 3 p.m. By 6 p.m. a copy was posted to the Society for Psychical Research. At that time some of the passages referred to might have been in type, others not yet, but in any case no one could have known their ultimate position on the page.

What was the purpose of this extraordinary test? The intelligence that gave it claimed that he was a discarnate human being. He desired to prove that the knowledge displayed was not springing from the mind of the medium or the sitter or anybody else living. But that it was associated with the memory of someone called dead, and was a proof of his greater mental powers than mortals possess.

How did he do it? This was the explanation which the entity gave:

"These tests have been devised by others in a more advanced sphere than mine, and I have caught their ideas. I am not yet aware exactly how one obtains these tests, and have wondered whether the higher guides exert some influence whereby a suitable advertisement comes into position on the convenient date. I am able to sense what appear to me to be sheets and slips of paper with names and various information upon them. I notice suitable items and, afterwards, visualize a duplicate of the page with these items falling into their places. At first I was unable to do this. It seems to me that it is an ability which throws some light upon foretelling, a visualizing of what is to be, but based upon that which already is. Sometimes I see further detail upon visualizing which I had not sensed from the letters. I think there is an etheric foreshadowing of things about to be done. It would probably be impossible to get anything very far ahead, but only within a certain number of hours, and I cannot say how many. I scarcely think it would be possible to get a test for the day after the morrow, or, even if possible, that it could result in more than a jumble of the morrow's with a few of the day following."

Highly interesting, but a little beyond our grasp! We always find that in things psychic. We always have to reach higher and learn by our efforts. An effort at improvement is always manifest on the invisible side. These newspaper tests, for instance, represent a step forward in development from the book tests which the Rev. Drayton Thomas, and also Lady Glenconner, had put on previous record. They were devised for a similar purpose: to disprove telepathy, and establish the existence of intelligences out of the flesh. The sitter asked a question. The trance entity did not answer in the ordinary way. He said that if the sitter would look up a certain book on a certain shelf in his home on page so and so he would find the answer. The books selected were usually those of which the communicator was fond in his lifetime. That alone was a suggestion of personal identity, but not yet fool-proof. So the test was tried with books unknown to the sitter, sent by an antiquarian in an unopened parcel, with books placed in the dark in an iron deed-box, with an unseen bookshelf, etc. The communicator was equally successful in selecting from these books suitable items in answer to the questions.

As an illustration, let us quote the experience of Sir William Barrett, late Professor of Physics at the Royal College of Science of Dublin, as told by himself in his preface to the Rev. Thomas' book. Sitting with Mrs. Leonard he was given the following message which purported to come from the discarnate F. W. H. Myers, a pioneer psychical researcher:

"There were some books on the right-hand side of a room upstairs in your house in Devonshire Place. On the second shelf, four feet from the ground, in the fourth book counting from the left, at the top of page 78, are some words which you should take as direct answer from him (Myers) to so much of the work you have been doing since he passed over. Asked if the name of the book could be given, the reply was 'No', but that whilst feeling on the cover of the book he got a sense of 'progression'. Two or three books from this test book are one or two books on matters in which Sir William used to be very interested, but not of late years. It is connected with studies of his youth."

Mrs. Leonard had never visited Sir William's house.

He himself had no idea what books were referred to, but on returning home he found in the exact position indicated George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. On the first line at the top of page seventy-eight were the words: "Ay, ay, I remember - you'll see I've remembered 'em all." It was a singularly appropriate quotation, as much of Sir William's work since Mr. Myers passed over concentrated on the question of survival after death and whether the memories of friends on earth continued with the discarnate. But the most remarkable part of the test was this: In dusting the bookshelves the maidservant, unknown to the Professor, had replaced two of George Eliot's novels by two volumes of Dr. Tyndall, *Heat*, and *Sound*, which were found exactly in the position indicated. In his youth Prof. Barrett was an assistant to Prof. Tyndall and one of the books was written whilst he was with him.

Again the question: What is the process by which the relevant passage in a closed book can be gleaned? The communicator replied that "he sensed the appropriate spirit of the passage rather than the letters composing it." After eighteen months he appeared to acquire the power of occasionally seeing the words by some sort of clairvoyance. The giving of the page was one of the greatest difficulties. The operator appeared to count the pages between the suitable text and the commencement. He started from the beginning of the printed matter and when the flow of thoughts stopped and recommenced higher he concluded that a page had been passed.

Who is Mrs. Leonard, this highly efficient doorkeeper between two worlds? Before the war she was a professional singer. She blundered into Spiritualism behind the scenes. In her dressingroom with two girl friends she tried table-turning experiments. After a series of failures, exciting things happened. In the subdued light on the white walls "like clearly cut shadows which showed up perfectly against the light background" strange forms appeared. Messages came through the table from an entity who called herself Feda. She said she was an Indian native girl who, at the age of thirteen, around 1800, married an ancestor of Mrs. Leonard and died shortly after. She constituted herself as her "guide", and in March, 1914, gave instructions that Mrs. Leonard must begin work as a professional medium for "something big and terrible is going to happen to the world. Feda must help many people through you."

Help she did. Her *cas celebre* by which she founded Mrs. Leonard's reputation came in the autumn of 1915. To Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge whose son Raymond was killed in action in September, she gave evidence of his survival. On September 25th, 1915, Lady Lodge had an anonymous sitting. Raymond purported to communicate and sent this message:

"Tell father I have met some friends of his."

On asking for names, Myers was mentioned. The very man, long dead, from whom a message of warning of the impending blow was sent to Sir Oliver through Mrs. Piper, the famous American medium.

On November 25th, Sir Oliver Lodge received a letter from a complete stranger. She was in possession of a photograph of the officers of the South Lancashire Regiment, of which Raymond Lodge was a second lieutenant, and offered to send it. The picture was totally unknown to the Lodge family. On December 3rd, in a sitting with Mrs. Leonard, a complete description of the photograph came through. Raymond sitting on the ground, an officer placing his hand on his shoulder. Four days later the photograph arrived and corresponded with the description in every detail.

Of the many other messages, bearing the stamp of Raymond's identity, the episode of "Mr. Jackson" is the most curious one. Feda was puzzled. She said that Raymond was funny. He mixes it up with a bird and pedestal.

"Mr. Jackson" was a peacock which, after its death, was stuffed and put on a pedestal.

Feda is quite a famous personality. She is known to researchers all over the world. The woman who knows her the least is Mrs. Leonard. She goes out when Feda comes in. She cannot remember what happens whilst she is entranced. But once she heard Feda speak. In the home of Mr. Dennis Bradley, the author, she spoke to her in the "direct" voice.

Why should Feda, a child in mentality, act as control? All we can rely on is what we are told. Apparently it requires a special aptitude to use the body of someone else. And in some cases people who die young are more efficient than grown-ups.

Occasionally, Feda vacates her place for others. And in late years a whispered voice is often heard near the medium before Feda picks up the message. The Society for Psychical Research recorded this voice on the gramophone. It is not coming through the medium's vocal organ. In discussing it with Sir Oliver Lodge he gave me his own experience as follows:

"I have heard the whisper before Feda spoke. Somebody is telling her things which she repeats. If you are sharp of hearing, you can hear the whisper before Feda speaks, and it is better than her interpretation. The last time when I heard this whisper, my daughter, who was with me, recognized her mother's voice quite clearly, without a possibility of doubt."

Feda is not an exclusive guide. There is another. A picturesque Red Indian who calls himself North Star and is interested in healing. His methods are highly unorthodox. To quote from Mrs. Leonard's autobiography: *My Life in Two Worlds*, this is how he cured a certain Mrs. Massey:

"Mrs. Massey's chair was a wooden rocking one. Suddenly her chair began to rock backwards and forwards, gently at first, then gathering speed, till it rocked at a tremendous rate. Then, to our horror, the chair turned a complete somersault. So did Mrs. Massey. She fell right on her head, and lay where she fell. I rushed to her, and before I realized what was happening, North Star had taken control of me. A lump, the size of an egg, had come up on Mrs. Massey's head. North Star placed my hands upon it; in a few moments it had gone. North Star then left her head alone and proceeded to make passes over her body, particularly over the heart. He gave loud grunts of satisfaction, and seemed extraordinarily well pleased with something. After about half an hour's hard work he stopped controlling me, and Mrs. Massey then disclosed the fact that she had felt very ill for some days past, and she felt better now than she had done for months."

A bump for a lump! A good slogan, but not likely to attract the sick. The levity, however, is not fully justified. North Star is a very solemn personality. Believe it or not, there is something in his ways which does not meet the eye.

Chapter 17: From Medium to Genius Story of Jesse Francis Grierson Shepard

- Nandor Fodor -

IN MY *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* I define inspiration as "a psychic state in which one becomes susceptible to creative spiritual influence or, to a varying degree, lends oneself as an instrument for through-flowing ideas".

We draw on inspiration or inspiration draws on us. We create consciously as men of letters, science and art, or become instruments. In other words, mediums.

But the line of distinction is not clear. Genius or medium, there are cases in which the choice is compelling.

Francis Grierson, the famous American writer of Scottish and Irish parents, offers a test. Known as Jesse Shepard, the musical medium for almost forty years, in the latter part of his life he chose to be a genius. He trimmed Jesse Francis Grierson Shepard to his two middle names and lived down one of the strangest careers of the last century as a master of literary art.

There is only one reason why the revelation should shock the world of literature. Grierson's genius as revealed in his *Modern Mysticism*, *The Celtic Temperament* and *The Humour of the Underman* was a small quantity beside his musical gifts.

Had he been able to claim them as products of his own consciousness he might have gone down in history as the greatest musician the world ever had.

An intimate knowledge of his history mollifies the boldness of this statement. Who would not be the greatest musician of the world if alternately inspired by Mozart, Beethoven, Meyerbeer, Rossini, Sontag, Persiani, Malibran, Lablache, Liszt, Berlioz and Chopin? And who could claim such an inspiration without a delivery more brilliant than any which connoisseurs had ever heard?

The first question is pure Spiritualism, the second is a question of facts. However absurd in many of its points the following quotation may appear, I ask the patience of the reader for Prince Adam Wisniewski's account in the Italian *Vessillo Spiritista* of a musical séance on September 3rd, 1894:

"After having secured the most complete obscurity," the Prince writes, "we placed ourselves in a circle around the medium, seated before the piano. Hardly were the first chords struck when we saw lights appearing in every corner of the room. The great pianists and composers of all epochs arrived, some to perform, others to hear the music. The first piece played through Shepard was a Fantasia of Thalberg's on the air from Semiramide. This is unpublished, as is all the music which is played by the spirits through Shepard. The second was a rhapsody for four hands, played by Liszt and Thalberg with astounding fire, a sonority truly grand, and a masterly interpretation. Notwithstanding this extraordinary complex technique, the harmony was admirable, such as no one present had ever known paralleled even by Liszt himself, whom I personally knew and in whom passion and delicacy were united. In the circle were musicians who, like myself, had heard the greatest pianists in Europe; but we can say that we never heard such truly supernatural execution.

"A globe of light which appeared on the hand of Mme. D. announced the arrival of Chopin. He always manifests his presence in this fashion. He executed a fantasia which recalled the duct Adalgisa and Norma, with mysterious arpeggios of crystalline and expressive tones which distinguish Chopin. On this occasion his spirit vouchsafed most exquisite melodies with a pianissimo of diminishing tones and notes full of despair - a prayer to God for Poland. After him came Georges Sand. As I expressed my pleasure to find this genial soul in our midst, she gave three powerful raps on my knee. Mme. D. having said that she was jealous of this friendly sign, Georges Sand granted her the same favour. Then Mozart came and played with the agility and lightness of a sylph, with a variety of touch and a melodious style which were

the invariable marks of his genius. But the most marvellous incident of the evening was the presentation of the spirit of Berlioz by his two chaperons, Liszt and Thalberg. That was the first time that Berlioz had played through Shepard. He began by saying that the piano was tuned too low for his music (Shepard is also clairvoyant and clairaudient) and he tuned it a tone higher himself. For ten minutes we heard the spirits working with the piano, which was closed. At the first sound we observed that the instrument was about two notes higher. Then Berlioz played sweet, ideal music. It seemed as if we heard the little bells of a country church; as if we saw and heard a marriage procession descending the mountain side, and entering the edifice; then a music which imitated to perfection the sound of the organ and continued piano, pianissimo, and morendo, as if indicating that the marriage was celebrated, and the procession returning to the mountains. This piece finished, Berlioz, with the aid of several other spirits, restored the instrument to its first tuning and began playing on its ordinary tone while the lid was still shut. Several spirits came afterwards, speaking each his own language. Now Shepard is English, and, in addition to French, knows no other tongue. Once in trance, however, he speaks - or rather the spirits speak through him - in every living language. Thus Goethe has recited passages in German; a spirit calling itself Isaiah has spoken in Hebrew; Mahomet in Arabic. Spirits have come and translated these speeches, and promised to help us in our psycho-researches, and indicate to us the persons with whom we shall put ourselves in communication. After this séance Mr. Shepard was much exhausted, and had to retire to rest."

The Prince must have been a gibbering idiot, will the reader conclude? Even spiritualists will be left breathless by this account. They now dislike the return of the great ones and accord them a cool reception. Allowing for the exuberance of enthusiasm, the account still leaves a problem. It cannot be dismissed by calling Prince Adam, Wisniewski mad. He is not in bad company. In fact, in the best of the last century.

Jesse Shepard was the darling of kings. He performed at the Imperial Palace of Gatchina for the Czar of Russia and before a reunion of three royal houses at Cumberland Palace in Gmunden, Austria. His hostess was the Duchess of Cumberland, sister of the Empress of Russia, of the Princess of Wales and of the Queen of Greece. An account of what happened at the reunion is given by Mr. Lauritz Waldemar Tonner, of The Hague, in *Light*, March 17th, 1894. It says:

"I had also the good fortune to be present at Mr. Shepard's reception at the Cumberland Palace; I shall not soon forget the impression made on the royal assemblage by his music. The music room was brilliantly lighted by lamps and candles; H.R.H. the Duchess of Cumberland asked me if Mr. Shepard would not prefer less light; indeed, the Duchess seemed to realize, as if by intuition, that so much light would not add to the beauty of the music. Accordingly, some of the lamps were extinguished and the concert was given with only the candles burning. I feel certain that darkness would not have been objected to on this memorable occasion as Mr. Shepard has never been heard by a more cultured and intelligent audience. The Queen of Hanover, who was sitting beside H.R.H. the Reigning Duke of Saxe-Altenburg, rose from her seat during the singing and exclaimed: 'I have never heard anything like it!' And the Queen of Denmark, who sat immediately behind Shepard, complimenting him at the dose, said that the piano playing had the effect of four hands instead of two."

The mystery deepens. But we need better testimonies.

Mr. Henry Kiddle, superintendent of the schools of New York, had Shepard in his own house for twelve months. On one occasion he heard him playing, under the control of "Mozart", a magnificent impromptu symphony and delivering at the same time, under the influence of "Aristotle", a learned philosophical dissertation. Further, he heard him in trance speak French, German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic and Arabic.

Shall we place Mr. Kiddle on the list of suspects? We do not know much of his credentials except that he was forced to resign because of his openly stated spiritualistic convictions. So let us leave him for the testimony of the editor of the *Dagblad*, the leading orthodox and aristocratic newspaper of the day in The Hague. He wrote on March 14th, 1894:

"All of a sudden in a moment of ecstasy, the bass voice turned into a soprano - not one of the falsettos one sometimes hears in theatres, but full, large, and of extraordinary volume, from

the lowest to the highest register. It was as if the room had suddenly been filled from all sides with splendid and ringing tones, melting together in a mighty harmony. It surpassed the piano music in power, although the tone of the piano became more and more fortissimo, and seemed like waves of tone swelling up from the instrument. It was as if one heard the word 'Excelsior!' Although we do not believe in the supernatural, the soul was taken hold of and carried to higher spheres. The inspiration which is awakened through Mr. Shepard's power is already quite wonderful enough. Why try to find an explanation in the supernatural?"

The editor was apparently deeply impressed by a man who professed to be utterly ignorant of music, who is claimed to have played the piano through shut keyboards, who rendered duets in bass and soprano, and who was not giving his demonstrations to make a living. For by this time Jesse Shepard had established himself in literature by two volumes than which Maeterlinck knew nothing more admirable and profound. He was a well-paid contributor to French newspapers and magazines. He only sat for his friends and in the strictest confidence. From Spiritualism he was gradually drifting away. Finally he severed the last tie by sacrificing his name. From then on nothing more was heard of his musical gifts. But his past lived in spiritualistic memory and in psychic periodicals. This is how he was advertised in the Medium, London, in 1870:

JESSE B. H. SHEPARD
THE CELEBRATED AMERICAN MEDIUM
(late from Paris)
Gives Sittings, Clairvoyant, Prophetic, Writing, Impression, Psychometric
Also gives diagnosis of disease, and discovers mediumistic faculties.
Charges are made according to the amount of time and labour undertaken.
N.B. - The music manifestations are not given at the same sitting.

His two initials are wrong. But there is no doubt about his identity. He not only advertised but, in the issue of May 6th, 1870, under the title, "How I became a Musical Medium", he tells his story himself. He was not taught music in the usual way. His psychic faculties first manifested in 1867 in the form of clairvoyant seeing, hearing and the power of healing. Later he developed "raps" and the gift of psychometry: sensing the story of an object or of the people connected with it by simply holding it. The turning-point of his career came in January, 1868.

"While I was in the theatre," he writes, "the spirit of Rachel came to me and asked if I would like to be developed in singing. She advised me to go next day and have the quality of my voice examined by a competent professor. I did so; called on a celebrated musician and told him my business. He was astonished at the power of my voice and facility of execution, facts of which I was ignorant myself, and of which I was no judge. The professor gave it as his opinion that the voice would not last long; it was too wonderful to be permanent. However, I was only two weeks in being developed, but when the important result had been accomplished, I was too sceptical to believe that I really can sing, and was in great doubt as to the propriety of making the attempt in public, all of which I expressed to the music professor, asking his opinion on the matter. He replied that he would be very proud to have me sing in Ave Maria in St. Xavier's Church, where he was organist. This is one of the most fashionable churches in the city, and the choir is composed of superior singers. On taking my place in the service, I was influence to sing the pieces allotted to me to the astonishment of all who heard me."

There is little of the supernatural in this account, and no mention is made of piano playing. But 1870 was the beginning of Shepard's career. He lived, at the time, the life of a professional medium. After his star had risen, he did his best to forget this.

As a mystic he was not the twice born, but the twice dead. He died for the first time in 1907 as Jesse Shepard, the musical medium, the second time in 1927 as Francis Grierson, the writer. The writer killed the medium, and the medium killed the writer.

In Los Angeles, at the age of seventy-eight, playing as of old at the piano, with the last dying strains his soul soiled after his immortal inspirers.

Chapter 18: **She was Tortured by Demons** **Story of Esther Cox**

- Nandor Fodor -

ANDREW LANG said that "since the days of ancient Egypt ghosts have learnt and forgotten nothing. About their ways, he might have added, we have learnt nothing and forgotten everything. We know of haunted houses, and we hear of haunted men. The ghost in the haunted house is the least troublesome of the two. You leave it alone and it will leave you alone. The manhaunter, the poltergeist, will not. It carries on in daylight. It is bent on mischief and malice. It is cruel, occasionally malefic and a danger to life.

Fortunately, the latter type is extremely rare. The victims of the poltergeist are usually children nearing the age of puberty. But no physiologist has yet succeeded in running poltergeists to their lair. Their mystery cannot be dissociated from the gamut of psychic experiences. As a rule, they inflict but a short ordeal. The nameless horror which stalked Esther Cox at Amherst, Nova Scotia, in 1878-79 knows of no precedent.

Professor William James, in his presidential address to the Society for Psychical Research, approached The Great Amherst Mystery with respectful interrogation as the most interesting case of its kind on record. The epithet is rather mild for a Grand Guignol. For in the house of Daniel Teed, an honest shoemaker, "murder lurked in the air". Esther Cox, his 19 years old sister-in-law, was tormented by fiends, fresh from hell, against whom no human power could prevail.

The original record of the phenomena we owe to Walter Hubbell, an American actor. He believed himself smart enough to expose the ghost. When he found a genuine mystery, he conceived the brilliant idea of taking Esther Cox on a lecture tour, hoping that the ghost would do a turn on the stage. It was, however, the audience which made things lively. The company managed to escape lynching and went back to Amherst to face the wrath of the ghost.

Hubbell's journal of 2,500 words in which he jotted down his daily experiences is extant. Except in colouring and dramatization, it discloses no serious discrepancy from the book of 10,000 words in which his story was first published. The facts have never been challenged. In 1907 they were borne out by a personal investigation on the spot. Dr. Hereward Carrington, Director of the New York Psychical Institute and Laboratory, interviewed the survivors and visited Esther Cox in Boston, where she lived a normal and happy married life. She was known there as a hardworking' respectable and truth-loving woman. But she would not speak of her experiences. She was "afraid they would come back".

According to Hubbell's summary, the reign of terror in the Teed home commenced on September 4th, 1878. Esther Cox and her sister Jennie heard a rustle in a pasteboard box under their bed. They thought it was a mouse. They pulled out the box into the middle of the room. The box sprung into the air about a foot, then fell and turned over. When it happened again the girls grew frightened, and their screams brought in the family. They listened to the story, roared with laughter, and sent the girls back to bed.

The following night Esther Cox jumped out of bed livid with terror. She was visibly swelling up. She screamed with pain and ground her teeth. There was a loud report like a peal of thunder. Mrs. Teed rushed out, thinking the house had been struck by lightning. As Esther was helped to bed three more terrific reports were heard, apparently coming from under her bed. They had a strange effect on Esther. She immediately assumed her natural appearance and sank into sleep.

Four nights later the attack returned with additional phenomena. The bedclothes, flew off the girls. Pillows jumped up and struck people in the face. A succession of the same mysterious reports restored quiet.

This was too much for the family. Dr. Carlitte was sent for. He found Esther suffering from a tremendous nervous shock. As he delivered his opinion the pillow slid out from under Esther's head, straightened itself, faced the doctor, then it slipped back. Dr. Carlitte's eyes opened wide with astonishment. The pillow repeated the act, and in a tug-of-war with John Teed, a healthy young farmer, proved the stronger one. The loud reports commenced under the bed and on the floor of the room. The bedclothes flew off.

"Before they had been put back on the bed to cover Esther, the distinct sound as of some person writing on the wall with a metallic instrument was heard. All looked at the wall whence the sound of writing came, when, to their great astonishment, there could be plainly read these words, 'Esther Cox, you are mine to kill'. Every person in the room could see the writing plainly, and yet a moment before nothing was to be seen but the plain wall. I have seen this writing; it was deeply indented in the wall, and looked to me as if it had been written with a dull instrument, probably a large iron spike. I say a dull instrument, because the writing had a very uneven appearance, and the invisible power that wrote it was certainly neither an elegant nor an accomplished penman."

The characters were nearly a foot high. Before the eyes of a bewildered doctor a piece of plaster detached itself from the same wall, turned a corner in its flight, and fell at his feet. The pounding commenced again, then it left the room and sounded on the roof of the house as blows from a sledgehammer. It was a moonlit night. The doctor saw no one on the roof. Yet the pounding could be heard from 200 yards away.

The newspapers got hold of the story. Rev. Dr. Edwin Clay, a well-known Baptist clergyman, came to investigate. He advanced the theory that Esther Cox's body became an electric battery which flashed minute and invisible lightning. Rev. R. A. Temple, Pastor of the Wesleyan Church at Amherst, had no theory to submit. But he saw a bucket of cold water become agitated and to all appearance boil while it was standing on the kitchen table.

Dramatic discoveries followed. Esther could hear the ghost. He was going to put the house on fire. To the consternation of all, lighted matches began to fall from the ceiling. A dress of Esther bounced off the nail in the wall, rolled up, slid under the bed and began to burn. They hid the matches. The ghost found them and by lighting fires all over the house kept the inhabitants in a state of fearful agitation. He apparently heard every word and answered questions by knocking three times for yes, once for no. A little later he became visible to Esther, an old man with a scraggy grey beard, dressed like a dirty tramp. He glared at her and said that if she did not leave the house at once he would kindle a fire in the loft under the roof and burn them all to death.

Driven out by the fiend, Esther found refuge in the house of John White, a local saloon keeper. For four weeks she was left in peace. Then the devil's work began. One day while she was scrubbing the hall, the brush disappeared from under her hand. She screamed, for she heard the ghost say that he had taken it. After a vain five minutes' search the brush fell from the ceiling, just grazing her head in its fall. The ghost could be heard by all people walking about in the house, and twice he stabbed Esther in the back with a clasp-knife belonging to White's little boy, leaving the knife sticking in the wound, and terrorized all and sundry in the house.

When Hubbell arrived on the scene Esther Cox was back at her uncle's house. The ghost put in a terrible protest against his stay in the haunted cottage.

"I had been seated about five minutes," he writes, "when, to my great amazement, my umbrella was thrown a distance of fifteen feet, passing over my head in its strange flight, and almost at the same instant a large carving knife came whizzing through the air, passing over Esther's head, who was just then coming out of the pantry with a large dish in both hands, and fell in front of her, near me, having come from behind her and out of the pantry. I naturally went to the door and looked in; no person was there."

"Oh, you will soon get used to them. I do not think they like you," said Esther Cox.

That was an under-statement of the ghost's sentiments. During the day a large chair rushed against Hubbell from the opposite side of the room, nearly knocking the one on which he sat from under him. The coppertoe shoe of little George hit him a heavy blow behind the ears. A glass paper weight, weighing fully a pound, missed his head by inches and spun around for one quarter of a minute on the seat of the chair where it fell. It was followed by an empty inkstand, two bottles, his satchel, and a piece of cake snatched from little George's hand. When the child protested his clothes were torn off. And Esther's face was loudly smacked again and again by an invisible hand which left plain finger marks on her cheeks.

Hubbell was treated to a variety of vanishing mysteries. At breakfast the lid of the sugar bowl was heard to fall on the floor. But it disappeared. Five minutes later Mrs. Teed, Esther and himself saw it fall from the

ceiling.

"I saw it just before it fell," he writes, "and it was at the moment suspended in the air about one foot from the ceiling. No one was within five feet of it at the time. The table knives were then thrown upon the floor, the chairs pitched over, and after breakfast the dining-table fell over on its side, rugs upon the floor were slid about, and the whole room literally turned into a pandemonium, so filled with dust that I went into the parlour."

Next morning "I removed the lid (of the sugar bowl) and placed it on the table beside my cup of coffee, put sugar in the coffee, and had almost put my hand on the lid to put it on the sugar bowl to keep the flies out, when it disappeared - literally melted into the air."

Later, while Esther was about to enter the pantry, the lid came out from inside the pantry, being pushed through a broken pane of glass covered with brown paper, and fell to the floor, a distance of fully fifteen feet from its original place.

It was almost of daily occurrence for the ghost to bring articles from locked trunks and closets and place others in their stead. During breakfast the ghost knocked upon the table and produced a perfect imitation of whatever sounds were called for: drumming, sawing wood, rubbing out linen garments on a wash-board, etc. The cat was lifted from the floor to a height of five feet into the air, and then dropped on Esther's back, whence it rolled to the floor. It was so frightened that for several days it would not venture into the house again. It could see something, for the hair often rose on its tail and back, and it would leave the house in terror.

On the night of June 26th the ghost amused himself by sticking pins in Esther and Jennie and marking them from head to foot with crosses. The following day Hubbell was busy pulling pins out of Esther. "They came out of the air from all quarters, and were stuck into all the exposed portions of her person, even her head and inside of her ears." Twice an attempt was made to cut Esther's throat with a carving-knife. Once she was stabbed in the neck with a pair of shears, and once in the head with a fork.

The general pandemonium was no more due to a single ghost. There were several. Their names were found out and, in some instances, their story was traced. The chief malefactor was "Bob" Nickle; he said he was sixty years old when he died, and a shoemaker. Another infamous character answered to the name of "Maggie" Fisher. She said that she has been in hell for twelve years. Other ghosts stated their names as Peter Cox, Jane Nickle, and Eliza McNeal. They all could knock in an individual style and they were all ingenious in devising fresh torture for Esther. But none could outdo "Bob".

"I am positive," writes Hubbell, "that a more demoniac ghost or scheming scoundrel never haunted a house or tortured a human being as did this fire fiend and terror of the household."

He cursed in the strongest language. The ghost retaliated. The hand of Esther, while she was writing a letter to her sister, was rudely seized, and she wrote in a different hand:

"G__ d__ Hubbell's *so/e* to hell and yours!"

One afternoon Hubbell saw Esther and Mrs. Teed talk in an undertone. After much hesitancy, he was informed that "Maggie" stole a pair of black and white striped stockings belonging to Esther and put them on. According to Esther, the ghost raised the wrap she wore as far as her knees and she had seen the stockings on her legs. Hubbell commanded Maggie to give the stockings back. In a minute they fell out of the air and lay upon the floor before their eyes.

During the latter part of July it was no longer possible to keep Esther in the house. The violence of the ghosts was insupportable. Fires were continually lit, things were broken, and "strange, unnatural voices could be heard in the air, calling us by our names in the broad light of the day."

So Esther Cox was driven out again. The last that Hubbell heard of her was that the ghost burnt down a barn where she stayed, and that she was sentenced to four months in jail in lieu of the ghost.

Is there any solution to this fearful mystery? Some time before the trouble started a shoemaker, named Bob McNeal, attempted, at the point of a revolver, to commit an outrage on Esther Cox. According to a critical

study of the Great Amherst Mystery by the late Dr. W. F. Prince, Research Officer of the Boston Society for Psychical Research, "the name of 'Bob' Nickle is but a thin disguise for that of the man who was the centre to Esther of both attraction and horror, 'Bob' McNeal. Bob Nickle was, like his prototype, a shoemaker. The 'malice' of the ghost as shown in many of the manifestations was but the dramatization of the depth of wickedness and mischief which the girl had suddenly glimpsed in the living man. The scratching on the wall of the words, 'Esther Cox, you are mine to kill', was but her automatic supernalization of the threats of McNeal as, maddened and exulting in his brute strength, he held the revolver to her breast."

Daniel Teed explained the true nature of the torture to Hubbell.

"It is plain from the journal," writes Dr. Prince, "that the torture consisted in 'Bob' Nickle being supposed to act the part of the incubus, an obvious objectification of McNeal's vile purpose on the night of August 28th."

Does this analytical explanation light up the mystery? Hubbell believed that the actual villain of the piece was a ghost who obsessed "Bob" McNeal, the living man, and transferred his attention to Esther when, as a result of the shock, her nervous system became disorganized.

So much is certain that the psychological explanation provides no answer for the greater part of this awful mystery.

Chapter 19: Witchcraft made Science

Story of Eusapia Paladino

- Nandor Fodor -

THERE WAS an Irish Bishop who remarked on *Gulliver's Travels* that it was full of improbabilities, and that he scarcely believed half of it. One wonders whether he paid a compliment to Swift's fantasy or the reverse. And one is tempted to ask what the good old Bishop would have said to a genuine mystery, such as the case of Eusapia Paladino. Improbable as her story is, it cannot be refused belief. Famous scientists have been exercised over it for more than thirty years. They risked their reputation on her remarkable phenomena, which seemed to portend to Schiaparelli, the discoverer of the Canals of Mars "the beginning of a new science pregnant with consequences of the highest importance".

She was an almost illiterate Italian peasant woman, ill-cultured, frequently falling in good sense and even common sense, so impulsive and violent that she would fly at people and beat them if they questioned her reputation as a medium.

Why should the world of science lavish attention on a woman of this type?

She brought witchcraft within the domain of science.

Most appropriately, Cesar Lombroso, the famous Italian criminal anthropologist, was the first to bow his head to this revolution in human thought.

In 1888 he was challenged by Dr. Ercole Chiaia, a noted Italian researcher, to investigate the case of a humble woman. Chiaia said that she could make a table advance by glaring at it; that she could make it back away by warning it off; that by lifting up her hand she could make objects ascend in the air and remain suspended like Mahomet's coffin; that she could herself rise in the air no matter what hands tied her down; that she could play on distant musical instruments; that she could draw on cards whatever people suggest by simply pointing at them; that she could assume strange forms; that no one knew how many legs and arms she had, for while she was being held other limbs came into view without her knowing where they came from.

Lombroso ignored the challenge for over two years. Then, on visiting Naples, he joined Professors Tamburini, Bianchi, Violi and five doctors in a sitting. He saw things which Chiaia claimed but he would not believe. Striking a match, he saw a handbell suspended in the air and ringing without visible contact.

In a statement to the Press he declared:

"I am ashamed and grieved at having opposed with so much tenacity the possibility of the so-called spiritistic facts; I say facts because I am still opposed to the theory. But the facts exist, and I boast of being a slave to facts."

After fifteen years of investigation he ended by accepting the theory as well.

Lombroso's testimony placed Eusapia Paladino in the limelight and initiated an exciting scientific quest. In 1892 there was an investigation at Milan in which Schiaparelli, Prof. Gerosa, Dr. G. B. Ermacora, Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia, Baron Carl du Prel, author of the *Philosophy of Mysticism*, and Professor Charles Richet of the Sorbonne took part. Eusapia emerged with flying colours. The report, based on 17 sittings, stated:

"It is impossible to count the number of times that a hand appeared and was touched by one of us. Suffice it to say that doubt was no longer possible. It was indeed a living human hand which we saw and touched, while at the same time the bust and the arms of the medium remained visible and her hands were held by those on either side of her."

Science was aroused. Professors came to Naples from all over Europe. Eusapia was pursued by invitations.

She strode from conquest to conquest.

Francesco Porro, Director of the Observatories of Genoa and Turin, concluded:

"The phenomena are real. They cannot be explained either by fraud or hallucination."

That they were not of an illusory character appears from his further testimony:

"Next a formidable blow, like the stroke of the fist of an athlete, is struck in the middle of the table. The blows are now redoubled and are so terrific that it seems as if they would split the table. A single one of these fist blows, planted in the back, would suffice to break the vertebral column."

Who struck the blows? The force was always associated with intelligence. That intelligence claimed to be an entity who is quite famous in the annals of Spiritualism: John King, alias Sir Henry Morgan, the buccaneer. He is the most romantic "spirit control", father of Katie King, the beautiful spirit girl of whom Sir William Crookes took forty-four flashlight photographs in his sittings with Florence Cook. It appears as if Katie King had a sister. Signor Damiani's English wife was told by John King in London that he had a reincarnated daughter in Italy who was a very powerful medium. He gave her name and address. Acting on this information, Signor Damiani discovered Eusapia Paladino.

The old pirate was a genial soul. He did his best to oblige scientists. They could not help accepting him as a personality. Not quite a secondary one. For he showed himself, though mostly in parts.

Describing John King's materialized hand, Prof. Richet says:

"I held it firmly and counted twenty-nine seconds, during all which time I had leisure to observe both of Eusapia's hands on the table, to ask Mme. Curie if she was sure of her control, to call Courtier's attention, and also to feel, press and identify a real hand through the curtain. After twenty-nine seconds I said: 'I want something more, I want *uno anello* (a ring) on this hand.' At once the hand made me feel a ring: I said '*adesso uno braccetto*' (now a bracelet) and on the wrist I felt the two ends as of a woman's bracelet that closes by a hinge. I then asked that this hand should melt in mine, but the hand disengaged itself by a strong effort and I felt nothing further."

This happened to a professor of physiology who won the Nobel prize for his attainments!

The experience was shared by others. Philippe Bottazzi, professor of physiology at the University of Naples "four times saw an enormous black fist come out from behind the left curtain, which remained motionless and advanced toward the head of Mme. B."

The swarthy, bearded face of John King was a familiar sight to Eusapia's sitters. For a ghost he could perform unusual feats of strength. Here is how, according to Lombroso, he was seen, in a semi-materialized state, levitating Eusapia:

While Eusapia's hands "were being held by MM. Richet and Lombroso, she complained of hands which were grasping her under the arms; then, while in trance, with the changed voice characteristic of this state, she said: 'Now I lift my medium up on the table.' After two or three seconds the chair, with Eusapia in it, was not violently dashed, but lifted without hitting anything on the top of the table, and M. Richet and I are sure that we did not even assist the levitation by our force. After some talking in the trance state the medium announced her descent and (M. Finzi having been substituted for me), was deposited gently on the floor with the same security and precision, while Mme. Richet and Finzi followed the movements of her hands and body without at all assisting them, and kept asking each other questions about the position of the hands. Moreover, during the descent both gentlemen repeatedly felt a hand touch them on the head."

The suggestion that a group of scientists cannot take effective measures to bar an accomplice or cannot sufficiently immobilize the medium is too childish to consider. Enrico Morselli, Professor of Psychiatry at Genoa University, tied Eusapia Paladino to a camp bed in the way that he would tie a dangerous maniac.

Yet in fairly good light six phantoms presented themselves in succession in front of the cabinet, the last one being a woman with a baby in her arms. Each time, after the phantom retired, Morselli rushed into the cabinet and found the medium as he left her. He did not accept the spiritualistic explanation, but as to the genuineness of the phenomenon no doubt was left in his mind. Indeed, according to Richet, "more than thirty very sceptical scientific men were convinced, after long testing, that there proceeded from her body material forms having the appearances of life."

The mystery is a biological one. The depth of it has not yet been sounded.

The coming of the phenomena was preluded by marked sensations for Eusapia. According to Flammarion's description:

"she suddenly experiences an ardent desire to produce the phenomena; then she has a feeling of numbness and the gooseflesh sensation in her fingers; these sensations keep increasing; at the same time she feels in the lower portion of the vertebral column the flowing of a current which rapidly extends into her arms as far as her elbow, where it is gently arrested. It is at this point that the phenomenon takes place."

There was a depression on the medium's forehead due to an accident in childhood. From this depression Lombroso observed a spouting fountain of air. Others called it a breeze. At a good siŕcance, the breeze was very strong, after a poor one it was altogether lacking.

Between the movement of objects and the limbs of Eusapia there was a marked synchronism, on which Sir Oliver Lodge remarks:

"When six or seven feet away, the time interval (between the push and the movement of the object) was something like two seconds. When the accordion is being played, the fingers of the medium are moving in a thoroughly appropriate manner, and the process reminds one of the twitching of a dog's legs when he is supposed to be dreaming that he is chasing a hare. It is as if Eusapia were dreaming that she was fingering the instrument, and dreaming it so vividly that the instrument was actually played. It is as if a dog dreamt of the chase with such energy that a distant hare was really captured and killed, as by a phantom dog; and, fanciful as for the moment it may seem and valueless as I suppose such speculations are, I am, I confess, at present more than half disposed to look in some such direction for a clue to these effects."

Strange to say, this power of "vivid dreaming" could be transferred to the sitter if Eusapia held his hand. Flammarion struck three or four times in the direction of Victorien Sardou while Eusapia was holding his wrist. A second later Sardou felt the blows on his body tallying with the gesture.

Another dramatic display of this invisible contact was witnessed in Prof. Richet's house on the Isle of Roubaud, in 1894. Eusapia rubbed the end of her fingers with blue chalk, asked Prof. Richet to hold it and, advancing to the table, drew two crosses on the table top in the air. The blue marks disappeared from her finger and the crosses were found on the underside of the table. She also drew scrawls on Prof. Richet's jacket with Myers' fingers. Under the waistcoat on his shirt front a blue mark was discovered. Holding Richet's clean finger as though it were a pencil she drew, in good light, a blue line on a piece of white paper. Another time she took Schiaparelli's finger and wrote her own name with it on the top of a block of writing paper which the astronomer brought along. The writing was found inside the block.

The value of such demonstrations is by no means impaired by Eusapia's well-known propensity towards fraud. If the investigators were not on the look-out she was always ready to play tricks both in the conscious and in the unconscious state. If she was prevented in producing fraudulent results she produced the genuine article. After a genuine seance she was frequently ill the following day, sometimes even on the second day. She preferred deception if she could practise it; it did not exhaust her, and was amusing. As Dr. Carrington remarks, "practically every scientific committee detected her in attempting fraud, but every one of these committees emerged from their investigations quite convinced of the reality of these phenomena, except the Cambridge and American investigation which ended in exposure."

The Cambridge investigation took place in August-September, 1895, at the house of F. W. H. Myers. Sir Oliver Lodge, who attended two sittings, failed to detect any resemblance between the phenomena there

produced and those witnessed in the Isle of Roubaud. Continental scientists were more inclined to blame the exposers than the exposed. Eusapia succeeded in rehabilitating herself. There was a seance, held in good light, in Prof. Richet's library in Paris on December 1st, 1898. Astounding phenomena took place. And F. W. H. Myers, who submitted the report on the Cambridge exposure, on the solemn adjuration of Prof. Richet, avowed his renewed belief in the supernormal character of Eusapia's mediumship.

The Society for Psychical Research also reconsidered its attitude. In 1908 they sent a committee of three capable and sceptical investigators to Naples. They were: Mr. W. W. Bagally, a practical conjurer, Dr. Hereward Carrington, an amateur conjurer whose book, *The Physical Phenomena of Mediumship*, is the standard authority on fraudulent performances and the Hon. Everard Feilding, who also brought many a fraudulent medium to grief. The committee brought in a verdict which was a complete acknowledgement of Eusapia's extraordinary powers.

Against the American exposure in 1910, Carrington strongly dissented. He said that Eusapia presented a large number of striking phenomena which have never been explained. Howard Thurston, the famous American magician, supported his view in stating:

"I witnessed in person the table levitations of Mme. Eusapia Paladino ... and am thoroughly convinced that the phenomena I saw were not due to fraud and were not performed by the aid of her feet, knees or hands."

This sketch of Eusapia Paladino's story is necessarily brief. It is to her that the scientific recognition of the physical phenomena of medium ship is due. For she has been accorded that recognition. But as the facts could not be pigeon-holed, orthodoxy conveniently chooses to ignore them. On the day of their readmission a new age of science will be ushered in.

Chapter 20: He Convinced Gladstone of the Supernormal Story of William Eglinton

- Nandor Fodor -

FEW PEOPLE know that W. E. Gladstone took an active interest in psychical research. That he considered it "the most important work which is being done in the world - by far the most important". That as Prime Minister he had a sitting with William Eglinton, the story of which went around the world, and, incidentally, inconvenienced him somewhat. For he was deluged with letters from pious people who were horrified at seeing him engaged in "sorcery", and from others who were anxious to save him from becoming the victim of imposture or delusion.

The sitting took place on October 29th, 1884, in London, at the residence of a lady of distinction in Grosvenor Square. The story was first divulged in an interview which Eglinton gave to *Light* and which the daily Press speedily reprinted.

According to this, in the general conversation which preceded the sitting, Gladstone declared that:

"he was already convinced that there were subtle forces with which our puny mind could not deal and which he could not comprehend; he held the attitude, therefore, not of a scoffer, but of a student who had no reason to doubt the genuineness of my pretensions. His experiences in thought reading were sufficient to show that there were forces in nature which were not generally recognized."

There were four sitters and the medium. They took their places round an oval table of the usual description. One of them provided two common slates. Eglinton brought his own locked double slate.

"We began by asking Mr. Gladstone to write a question upon one of the school slates. He did so, and the slate was held by me beneath the table with the question upon the under side so that I could not see it, the other side being pressed closely against the under side of the table. Presently the writing began."

"Did Mr. Gladstone hear the writing?" - the interviewer asked.

"He did - and his face was a study. His intense look of amazement would have been amusing to those who have had experience of such phenomena, and was intensified when the slate was brought up and the few words which had been written were declared by him to be a pertinent reply to his question. The reply was, 'In the year 1857,' and on the slate being turned over, it was found that his question had been, 'Which year do you remember to have been more dry than the present one?' After that, Mr. Gladstone took the locked slate into a corner of the room, and on the inside of it wrote a question, which of course none of us saw. Then, locking the slate, and retaining the key, the slate was handed to one of the ladies and myself, and we both held it in the sight of all. While in this position, the writing was heard going on upon the closed surfaces, and upon the slate being opened, it was found that the question asked was, 'Is the Pope ill or well?' which has been answered in red pencil by the words, 'He is ill in mind, not in body.'"

The questions were purposely trivial. Gladstone, at the first stage, wanted to test whether it was possible to obtain writing at all.

"Of the subsequent experiments," continues Eglinton, "I can only say that they were perfectly successful; that some of the communications were written upon Mrs. O's own slates when held under the table; that several messages were given, not only between these two slates, but also within the locked slate, in view of all present; and that some of the questions were put in Spanish, French and Greek, and satisfactorily answered in the same languages."

Eglinton knew a little French, but no Spanish or Greek. He was quite emphatic:

"The written questions were in every case unknown to me; and pertinent answers, as I have told you, were written between slates fully exposed to view upon, or held over the table of a brilliantly lighted drawing-room, the writing being distinctly heard while in the actual process. Mr. Gladstone had the fullest opportunity of observation, and I have no doubt whatever that his keen, penetrating eyes, as he carefully watched all that was passing, assured him that everything was genuine. As one indication I may mention the evident interest he took in the messages themselves, which he could scarcely have done if he had any suspicion whatever of the bona fides of the experiments. From first to last he made a careful record of all the questions and all the replies."

Of course, this is Eglinton's own version. Yet it must have been a true account, for Gladstone never repudiated it. There was one *communique* from Downing Street in answer to a direct inquiry of the *Daily News*, signed by Horace Seymour. It only contained:

"Sir, I am directed by Mr. Gladstone to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday, and to say that while he cannot undertake to enter into details, he has expressed no conclusion upon the subject to which you refer."

Any further doubt as to the deep impression produced on Gladstone's mind by this séance is dispelled by the fact that some time after he joined the Society for Psychical Research, which had already enlisted many great scientists and statesmen of the day.

The phenomenon itself, which Gladstone witnessed, was one of the minor manifestations of William Eglinton's amazing mediumship. One which is now antiquated. Mediums came to realize that conjurers could duplicate such performances, so they abandoned this particular phase. But in Eglinton's days passions ran yet high, especially after the Society for Psychical Research had found an expert conjurer, Mr. S. J. Davey, who masqueraded as a medium. He produced messages on screwed, sealed and locked double slates of his sitters in various languages, in colours, in answer to mental requests; he made a tumbler walk across the table in strong gaslight, floated musical boxes and produced materialized figures. His feats were so marvellous that when he exposed himself, spiritualists accused him of being a renegade medium. The accusation could have been easily answered had Davey revealed the trick of all his performances. But that he refused to do. So as great a man as Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace wrote in 1891:

"Unless all can be so explained, many of us will be confirmed in our belief that Mr. Davey was really a medium as well as a conjurer; that in imputing all his performances to trick he was deceiving the society and the public."

Before all, Eglinton was a materialization medium, and a very remarkable one. He never gave a séance in his own rooms and complied with all conditions of control, his sleeves being mostly sewn to his knees or behind his back to his coat. A typical example of what occurred is the following description from Eglinton's biography(1):

(1) "Twixt Two Worlds: A Narrative of the Life and Work of William Eglinton", by John S. Farmer, London, 1886.

"All this time his breathing became increasingly laboured and deep. Then, standing in full view, by a quick movement of his fingers, he gently drew forth, apparently from under his morning coat, a dingy white looking substance. He drew it from him at right angles and allowed it to fall down at his left side. As it reached the ground it increased in volume and covered his left leg from the knee downwards. The mass of white material on the ground increased in bulk and commenced to pulsate, move up and down and sway from side to side. Its height increased and shortly afterwards it quickly grew into a form of full stature, completely enveloped in the white material. The upper part of this the medium then drew back and displayed the bearded face of a full-length materialized spirit, considerably taller than himself. All this time a link of white material was maintained between it and the medium, but this was now severed or became invisible and the spirit walked round the circle and shook hands with the various sitters. The enveloping white material was now seen to be a flowing robe, fastened round the waist with a girdle. After a few minutes the medium, still in trance, drew forth more of the white material and stretched it out to the spirit which eagerly grasped it. Finally the medium became weak, staggered, and was supported by the nearest sitter (Dawson Rogers, editor of *Light*), whereupon the spirit approached and dragged him into the

cabinet."

This marvellous description is in some agreement with modern observations on "ectoplasmic" flow. On the other hand, Eglinton's open air materializations have no parallel in spiritualistic history. This is a summary of Dr. Nichols' experiences in Malvern:

"Mr. Eglinton lay on a garden bench in plain sight. We saw the bodies of four visitors form themselves from a cloud of white vapour and then walk about, robed all in purest white, upon the lawn where no deception was possible. One of them walked quite around us, as we sat in our chairs on the grass, talking as familiarly as any friend ... took my hat from my head, put it on his own, and walked off with it where the medium was lying; then he came and put it on my head again; then walked across the lawn and up a gravel walk to the foot of the balcony and talked with Mrs. Nichols. After a brief conversation he returned to the medium and gradually faded from sight."

The spiritualistic Press of the day was full of such marvels. Mr. W. H. Harrison, the editor of *The Spiritualist* and a Fleet Street writer on science, reported the transportation of Eglinton through the ceiling of a locked room into the room above on March 16th, 1878, at Mrs. Macdougall Gregory's house at 21 Green Street, Grosvenor Square, London. He was one of seven sitters.

"The séance was held in the drawing-room on the first floor high above the street. The shutters of all the windows of the room were closed and barred; they could not have been opened without admitting light from the street. The door was locked on the inside and the key left in the lock. The table around which all the sitters sat was about two yards from the lock and considered in the most favourable position for enabling all the sitters to gaze into the passage if the door had been opened either to a large or small extent... Mr. George Sutherland, one of the sitters, was raised, chair and all, and placed on the centre of the table, where he was seen when a light was struck. Another sitter and his chair were raised about two feet. Mr. W. H. Harrison half seriously asked if the spirits could take Mr. Colman through the ceiling by way of giving a variety of manifestation; Mrs. Fletcher and Mr. Colman then called out simultaneously that Mr. Eglinton had broken the circle and left them. Mrs. Gregory told them to join hands. About the same moment, a chair, probably Mr. Eglinton's, was heard to fall lightly on its feet, apparently some yards from the circle; and a violent bump, caused by the falling of a heavy body on the floor of the room above, caused everybody to think that Mr. Eglinton was carried through the ceiling. So a light was struck.

"From the time the remark was made about Mr. Colman to the time the light was struck, was about a minute. From the time Mr. Eglinton disjoined hands to the time the fall in the room above was heard, was probably less than ten seconds; some of the sitters, a few minutes after the event occurred, estimated it at five seconds.

"When the light was struck, Mr. Eglinton was not in the room. Mr. George Sutherland unlocked the door by turning the key which was in the lock, and it was then noticed that the passage outside was fairly illuminated by reflected light from the gas in the hall below. Mrs. Gregory and several sitters proceeded upstairs, and found Mr. Eglinton lying in a deep trance on the floor with his arms extended. This was about two minutes after he disjoined hands in the room below. In two or three minutes he revived and complained of the back of his head being hurt, as if by a blow; beyond this there was nothing the matter with him and he was as well as before in a few minutes."

Were all these people dithering imbeciles or did Eglinton actually go through the ceiling?

In 3,500 sittings, dozens of which were given in Continental and Scandinavian universities, only three times was definite proof of fraud claimed against Eglinton. Archdeacon Colley cut a piece of the robe and beard of a materialized figure and found them fitting the muslin and beard which he discovered in the medium's portmanteau. In Munich his face and hands were found covered with lamp-black with which, secretly, the musical instruments had been daubed. The most disastrous one followed a visit to India.

He gave séances at the residence of the Maharajah Sir Jotendro Johun Tagore; he converted Lord William Beresford to Spiritualism and he levitated Harry Kellar, the famous conjurer who, being in Calcutta, issued a

public challenge. Eglinton accepted it. At the séance, while Kellar was firmly holding his left hand, the medium rose in the air and pulled Kellar after him so that "his own body appeared for the time being to have been rendered non-susceptible to gravity". Kellar acknowledged his defeat. "I went as a sceptic," he stated, "but I must own that I came away utterly unable to explain, by any natural means, the phenomena that I witnessed."

Such glory, apparently, did not satisfy Eglinton. He joined Mme. Blavatsky in engineering a theosophic miracle and compromised himself hopelessly. He was at first openly sceptical as to the existence of the Mahatmas. But before he left, his spirit controls declared their conversion and said that "they had been appointed to work in concert with the Brothers thenceforward". Collusion might have been a better word than concert. On board of the S.S. *Vega*, bound homeward, Eglinton claimed to have seen the apparition of Mahatma Koot Hoomi. He wrote out his experience in a letter which was miraculously transported to Bombay and dropped from the ceiling when Mme. Blavatsky had company. The letter was addressed to Mrs. Gordon, in Calcutta. In blue ink, over Eglinton's writing, there was a message from Koot Hoomi. Mine. Blavatsky added a postscript, whereupon the mysterious postman snatched the letter forthwith and dropped it from the ceiling in Mrs. Gordon's home in Calcutta.

It was a most effective miracle. But there was a hitch. A theosophist, named Mr. J. E. O'Connor, happened to be on board ship and unexpectedly asked Eglinton to enclose, as an additional test, a letter from him to Mme. Blavatsky. Eglinton could not refuse. But as he could not notify Mme. Blavatsky, O'Connor's letter did not arrive. And when Mahatma Koot Hoomi's writing was found to be, by experts, done in Mme. Blavatsky's hand, Eglinton denied that he ever met her and professed to be bewildered by his experience.

The last reports on Eglinton in the psychic Press concerned his visit in 1887 to Russia and his reception by Alexander III. He married on his return and, having become independent, retired from mediumship and spiritualism. He broke with his friends, but was not forgotten by them. They re-discovered him on the pinnacle of his new life. I was shown the *Who is Who* of 1929, and I studied certain strange agreements of particulars. It may come as a shock to many in Fleet Street to discover that, according to all these indications, William Eglington, one-time editor and chief proprietor of the *British Export Gazette*, of the *British South African Export Gazette*, of *The New Age* and of the *Tatler*, was none other than William Eglinton, the famous medium.

Chapter 21: Possessed of Power over the Soul of Things Story of Stanislaw Tomczyk

- Nandor Fodor -

PSYCHIC STUDIES often reveal a deep symbolism in poetic fancy. Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* is full of ideas for which a factual basis is suggested in psychical research. Tyltill and Myltill turn the diamond and liberate the soul of things. In esoteric philosophy a definite meaning is attached to this incident. It is that there is but one enduring reality, the idea, and not its manifestation in matter. The material shape is ephemeral, the idea lives on. Thoughts are things and, in that sense, things have souls.

Certain queer experiences in psychical research lend vraisemblance to this conception and point to possibilities of definite verification. No one could have been more startled by such a line of research than its originator, Dr. Julien Ochorowicz. While a lecturer of psychology at the University of Lemberg, he had the good fortune to discover in Mlle. Stanislaw Tomczyk, of Wisla, Poland, unknown and thoroughly mystifying powers. She was his patient whom he regularly hypnotized for therapeutic purposes. In the hypnotic sleep the girl disclosed an altered personality which answered to the name of Little Stasia.

She was capable of things beyond normal human power. She could stop a clock by looking at it. She could produce movement in objects without contact. She could influence a roulette to the extent that the number chosen by the medium turned up more often than justified by chance.



Mlle. Tomczyk and Dr. Ochorowicz, lecturer in psychology at the University of Lemberg. With Invisible rigid rays emanating from her fingers Mlle. Tomczyk lifts a pair of scissors.

As a miracle worker she was without peer. As a personality she was full of mischief and played no end of tricks on Mlle. Tomczyk. She did not know who she was. But she did not think she was the spirit of a dead person. As she had to be somebody, and as she suffered not from the limitations of secondary personalities, Dr. Ochorowicz labelled her as the "double" of the medium. His chief reason for doing so was that Little Stasia proved that she had a body. That body was not the physical body of Mlle. Tomczyk.

This is a very startling statement. Fortunately, Ochorowicz presented us with a detailed description of his experiments. The climax came on September 11th, 1911, when he obtained the photograph of an "etheric hand" on a sensitive film rolled up and enclosed in a bottle. The film, as it lay in the bottle, measured about three-quarters of an inch in diameter. The bottle had an orifice of about two-thirds of an inch. It was closed with the palm of Dr. Ochorowicz's right hand. With his left he laid it on his knee and held it there firmly. The medium then placed her two hands on the bottle between his. She seemed excited and exclaimed that she wished that a small hand might appear. Then she said:

"It is strange! The bottle seems to enlarge under my fingers; but perhaps this is an illusion. My hands swell, I cease to feel them."

An attack of cramp ensued, the medium screamed aloud, a moment or two later Dr. Ochorowicz broke the bottle, developed the film and found on it the imprint of a large hand with the thumb posed in line with the index finger, so that it might find room to appear on the film, which was 13 cm wide. The hand had the characteristics of that of the medium. In automatic writing, Little Stasia gave the following explanation:

"I crept in by a chink between your hand and the orifice of the bottle. Then I slipped my hand flat between the folds of the roll, and the light caused itself, I do not know how, I merely took care to make the film opaque."

Dr. Ochorowicz tried to discover the thickness of the "etheric hand". He found indications that it was less than a millimetre. That it was self-luminous. That under the effect of suggestion it could grow or diminish.

The next puzzling stage of his discoveries was reached when in several of these "radiographs" the medium's

ring appeared on the finger of her etheric hand. This seemed to indicate to him:

1. That there is a kind of link between the organism and the object it wears,
2. That the occult notion that material objects have an astral body is not limited to living bodies.

The ring did not always appear in the radiographs. Dr. Ochorowicz tried to find out whether objects frequently worn by the sensitive were more easily produced on the plate than others. He chose a thimble which she rarely used. The medium suggested that he should himself retain the thimble on the finger of his left hand, holding her with his right hand.

"Perhaps," she added, "the thimble will pass from your body on to my finger."

The experiment appeared absurd, but Dr. Ochorowicz was willing. He took a plate from his box, marked it, and laid it on the medium's knees. She was seated on his right. With his right hand he held up her left hand about sixteen inches above the plate, the thimble being on the middle finger of his left hand which he kept behind his left knee. A red lamp was burning at a distance of about three feet. After a minute had elapsed, the medium said that she felt a sort of tingling in the direction of her forearm, where their hands met. She exclaimed:

"Oh, how strange. Something is being placed on the tip of my finger... I do not know if it is the thimble; I feel something keeps pressing the end of my finger."

When the plate was developed it showed the hand of the medium, and on the middle finger was what she called jokingly the soul of her thimble.

Dr. Ochorowicz asked in some bewilderment: was the image a "double" of the thimble, or was it a photograph of the idea of the thimble?

A close examination of the photograph and comparison with the thimble showed that the two corresponded exactly, the one "was a true copy of the other, precise in details and in dimension". This exactness supports the idea of a direct impression from some object rather than a thought image merely. The finger supporting the thimble is the palest of all the fingers, probably, as Dr. Ochorowicz suggests, because the light by which the radiograph was taken proceeds from it. He leaned to the conclusion that an etheric hand wearing an etheric thimble produced the image, and that mental desire gave the direction to the light which was necessary in order to make the details of the thimble visible on the plate.

When, however, he proceeded to test his conclusion, a strange thing happened. Unknown to the medium he held in his left hand an Austrian five-crown piece. Presently she exclaimed:

"I see behind you a white round object ... it is the moon."

"At the same instant," writes Dr. Ochorowicz, "I saw a faint but distinct light pass near my left hand, which held the coin; it was not round, nor a flash, it was like a little meteor, like a thin ray, lighting up the space round my hand on the side away from the medium."

When the plate was developed it showed an image of a full moon.

"The moon floats," he wrote, "on the background of a less luminous cloud, and is of a rather different form from that in the preceding experiment."

The preceding experiment took place on September 7th, 1911. The medium the night before was much impressed by the superb light of the starry heavens, and particularly by the full moon at which she looked for some time with admiration. On the plate, instead of the little hand which was desired, a full moon appeared against a background of white cloud.

There was something very curious about this photograph of the moon. On April 17th, 1912, the moon was in eclipse. Cinematograph pictures disclosed a slight flattening of the image of the moon in the direction of the axis of rotation. This characteristic appears in the radiograph of September 7th. The impression was double and it looked as if the cloud had not been duplicated. In that case the moon alone must have moved. How

can we conceive - asked Dr. Ochorowicz - of this apparent movement of a mental image?

The next surprise which Little Stasia provided was the proof that she was not the double of the entranced medium. While Dr. Ochorowicz was having a lively conversation with Mlle. Tomczyk in her normal state, Little Stasia impressed her picture, as promised, on a photographic plate in a dark and empty adjoining room.

Who Little Stasia was mattered comparatively little. It was her phenomena which puzzled Ochorowicz and the world of science to which she was introduced. Invisible rigid rays appeared to issue from Mme. Tomczyk's finger-tips by the help of which, before a commission of physicians, physiologists and engineers, she could raise a pair of scissors or any other light objects into the air without material support. The rays were threadlike and acted like a line of force.

"I have felt this thread," writes Dr. Ochorowicz, "on my face, on my hair. When the medium separates her hands the thread gets thinner and disappears; it gives the same sensation as a spider's web. If it is cut with scissors its continuity is immediately restored. It seems to be formed of points; it can be photographed and it is then seen to be much thinner than an ordinary thread. It starts from the fingers. Needless to remark that the hands of the medium were carefully examined before every experiment."

When these photographs were thrown enlarged upon a screen the psychic structure became invisible. So much could be determined that there were swellings and nodes along it, like the waves of a vibrating cord.

When Mlle. Tomczyk lifted, supernormally, a ball, a whole number of filaments surrounded it like a net. In a photograph of a balance which was supernormally depressed, fine, hairlike threads are visible.

The cry of fraud is totally untenable. In good light it is a child's play to watch for the introduction of genuine hair. Eusapia Paladino when she tried it was invariably discovered. And then she immediately performed the feat by supernormal power.

The existence of such invisible threads were known before Ochorowicz. There are observations to prove that threads, finer than the spider's, may somewhat in the manner of cobwebs, connect the medium with the objects in the room which are supernormally set in motion. Mme. d'Esperance often complained of a cobwebby feeling on her face. Margery of Boston and many of her sitters had the same experience. Two years ago Professor Karl Blacher, of Riga, reported on his experiments with Frau Ideler, that she spun threads to accomplish telekinetic movements. She seemed to pull them from the inner side of her hand with her finger-tips. The threads seemed to be of a doughy, elastic substance, at first thick, then pulled fine, and felt soft and dry. Even while being handled they diminished perceptibly. A piece was secured and subjected at once to microscopic examination in an adjoining room. An enlargement of the microscopic photo shows that it is composed not of one strand, but of many fine but not organized threads. In its chemical composition the structure was not that of any known textile fabrics. Curiously, fire had no power over those threads. They made the flame withdraw. But they were conductors of electricity.

Such discoveries divest the phenomena of the seance-room of the miraculous and reduce them to facts of physiology and physics. They leave the psychological side unaffected. though. For the intelligence which so effectively uses the organism of the medium for such purposes, claims to be a spirit. Little Stasia was an exception. But then she did not know what she was. Spiritualists believe that they can offer a key to her riddle. They say she was one of the many who did not yet wake up to the fact that she changed over into another world of existence, in other words she did not know that she was dead.

Chapter 22: Being the Instruments of "Spirit Magic" Story of the Davenport Brothers

- Nandor Fodor -

THE MAIN difference between the performance of a magician and a medium is that the magician is always master of ceremonies, whereas the medium has to submit to the conditions imposed upon him. Magicians never attempt stage demonstrations under the control to which the medium is subjected. Without preparation, equipment and assistance they are helpless. Travesties of mediumistic performances they have given often enough in the past, but many masters of *leger-de-main* have also acknowledged the inexplicability of mediumistic phenomena.

If, then, mediums can beat the magicians at their own game, as the sceptic would put it, why don't they choose fame and fortune on the stage as magicians instead of abuse and vilification which they get as mediums?

Never in the eighty-four years' history of modern Spiritualism has a medium changed colours and set himself up as a magician. Only a few gave seances from the stage. Either the nature of their power could not stand a large and promiscuous audience, or they learnt from the bitter lesson of the American Davenport Brothers. At Hull, Huddersfield and Leeds, in 1864, they barely escaped lynching because they refused to declare themselves magicians. Those who too lightly dismiss their mystery as one of *leger-de-main* never face the psychological issue which their pathetic cry presents:

"Were we mere jugglers we should meet with no violence, or we should find protection. Could we declare that these things done in our presence were deception of the senses, we should, no doubt, reap a plentiful harvest of money and applause. As tricks they would transcend, according to the testimony of experienced observers, any ever exhibited in Occident or Orient. The wonders of the cabinet, or still more, of the dark séance, surpass all pretensions of conjurers. We should safely defy the world to equal them, and be honoured for our dexterity. But we are not jugglers, and truthfully declare that we are not, and we are mobbed from town to town, our property destroyed and our lives imperilled."

For the campaign of hatred and persecution which was started against them there is no apology.

"We never in public affirmed our belief in Spiritualism" - Ira Davenport is quoted in a letter by Harry Houdini. "That we regarded as no business of the public, nor did we offer our entertainment as the result of sleight-of-hand or, on the other hand, as Spiritualism. We let our friends and foes settle that as best they could between themselves but, unfortunately, we were often the victims of their disagreement."

Truly, this is a remarkable set of circumstances. Extraordinary things must have been witnessed in their demonstrations if, without an open claim on their part, people saw no escape from ascribing them to supernatural forces.

What were these demonstrations?

Dion Boucicault, the famous actor in whose house the Davenport Brothers gave their first séance in London, on October 11th, 1864, sent a detailed report to the *Daily News*. Lord Bury, Sir Charles Nicholson, Sir John Gardiner, Sir C. Lennox Wyke, Robert Bell, Robert Chambers, Capt. E. A. Inglefield, Rev. E. H. Newenham, Rev. W. Ellis, and fourteen others were present. The séance was held in a large drawing-room from which all surplus furniture had been previously removed. Six guitars and two tambourines were bought from a neighbouring music shop and were placed, with some bells and trumpets, on the floor of an improvised cabinet. The Davenport Brothers and Mr. W. H. Fay, a third medium of their party, were searched. Then the two brothers entered the cabinet. With hands behind their back they were bound firmly to their seat by a nautical gentleman who was "profound" in the matter of knots. The knots on their ligatures were sealed with wax. The doors were then closed upon them, sufficient light being kept in the outside room to see what happened.

Instantly a Babel of sound, a crazy play on all the instruments at once issued from the cabinet. The following incident seemed to be particularly worthy of note:

"While Lord Bury was stooping inside the cabinet, the door being open, the two operators seen to be seated and bound, a detached hand was clearly observed to descend upon him, and he started back, remarking that he had been struck. Again, in the full light of the gas chandelier, and during an interval in the séance, the doors of the cabinet being open, and while the ligatures of the brothers were being examined, a very white thin female hand and wrist quivered for several seconds in the air above. This appearance drew a general exclamation from all the party. Sir Charles Wyke now entered the cabinet and sat between the two young men, his hands being right and left on each, and secured to them. The doors were then closed and the Babel of sounds recommenced. Several hands appeared at the orifice, amongst them the hand of a child. After a time, Sir Charles returned amongst us and stated that while he held the two brothers, several hands touched his face and pulled his hair; the instruments at his feet crept up, played round his body, and over his head, one of them lodging eventually on his shoulders. During the foregoing incidents, the hands which appeared were touched and grasped by Capt. Inglefield, and he stated that to the touch they were apparently human hands, though they passed away from his grasp."

In the second part of the séance the Davenport Brothers, as was their general habit, quitted the cabinet and sat amongst the guests in the dark. By invisible hands in two minutes and a half they were tied hand and foot. While this was being done a pandemonium of music raged. A shooting light was seen. Several sitters were simultaneously touched or struck by hands. All this while they were firmly holding hands. No one could move without the two adjacent neighbours being aware of it. Under the legs of the mediums a sheet of paper was placed on which an outline of their shoes was drawn. They were asked to count constantly. Their voices could be located all the time.

"Mr. Fay then asked that his coat should be removed. We heard a violent twitch and here occurred a most remarkable fact. A light was struck before the coat had quite left Mr. Fay's person, and it was seen quitting him, and plucked off him upwards. It flew up to the chandelier, where it hung for a moment and then fell to the ground. Mr. Fay was seen meanwhile bound hand and foot as before. One of our party now divested himself of his coat, and it was placed on the table. The light was extinguished and this coat was rushed on to Mr. Fay with equal rapidity."

Boucicault's account must be assumed accurate, for the reports of the correspondents of *The Times*, *Standard* and *Telegraph* agreed with these statements.

What was the meaning of all this? Boucicault was not a spiritualist. He protested that such puerile phenomena, however mysterious, should be considered spiritual. Whereupon Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, one of Spiritualism's historians, remarks⁽¹⁾:

(1) "Nineteenth Century Miracles", London, 1884, p. 156.

"Had we an opportunity of questioning Mr. Boucicault concerning his opinion as to what becomes of the great mass of mankind that sit nightly to watch his dramas, perhaps we might be in a position to show that the taste of the majority inclines to puerility only, and that anything that was not puerile would not represent the vanished millions that have passed through the gates of death to the life beyond, where it is exceedingly doubtful if puerile spirits become wise in the twinkling of an eye, or low men or women suddenly become exalted angels. Meantime, the question is not one of quality, but kind. Were the manifestations recorded above made by the Davenports, if not, by whom and what?"

No one has ever succeeded in proving that the manifestations were made by the Davenports. Naturally they were so accused because apparently there was no other solution. But the magicians who tried to emulate them produced an infantile and almost grotesque parody of the Davenport phenomena. Spiritualists alone claimed to understand all the pranks by which occasionally people were frightened. Here is an account of what happened at the Imperial Court at St. Cloud, in the presence of Emperor and Empress Louis Napoleon:

"The Marquis La Grange, having entered the cabinet with the Davenports, he extended his arms, and was fast bound to the brothers in the usual way. The instant the doors were closed the noise and confusion which was heard within the cabinet surprised the Imperial party extremely; when the doors were thrown open and the Marquis was seen with his cravat removed, a bell stuck in his waistcoat, the violin and guitar fantastically arranged about his person, and the tambourine upon his head, the Emperor threw himself back in his chair and laughed heartily at the grotesque appearance of the helpless and somewhat frightened Marquis, who, on his part, seriously and emphatically assured the company that the brothers had not moved a muscle."

In the early demonstrations of the Davenport Brothers in America, pistols were fired in the dark seance against a minute mark which was always hit with marvellous precision. In a billiard-room in Milwaukee, in total darkness, the balls were heard to roll and click against each other, the cues moved, and the game appeared to be regularly played, marked and counted.

In an attempt to solve these problems it is not sufficient to postulate the exteriorization of an unknown biological force which Dr. Loomis, Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology in the Georgetown Medical College, America, submitted. The intelligence, or intelligences, which ruled the force, appeared to see in the dark. The operation could hardly be ascribed to the immobilized brothers as it often transcended the known laws of physics. Here is how Mr. Robert Cooper, who spent several months in the study of the Davenport phenomena in England, described in his book(1), the flying coat phenomenon:

(1) "Spiritual Experiences, including Seven Months with the Brothers Davenport" London, 1867.

"The coat of Mr. Fay has, scores of times, been taken from his back in my presence, and Mr. Fay at the time might be sitting like a statue with his hands securely tied behind him and the knots sealed. I have seen coats of various descriptions, from a large overcoat to a light paletot, put on in the place of his own in a moment of time, his hands remaining securely tied and the seal unbroken. I have known the coat that has been placed on Mr. Fay so small that it could only with difficulty be got off him. I have known a coat that was first placed on Mr. Fay transferred in a moment on Ira Davenport, whose hands, like Mr. Fay's, were tied behind him, and the most curious part of the proceedings was that it was put on inside out. I have also known the waistcoat of Ira Davenport taken from under his coat, all buttoned up, with his watch and guard just as he wore it."

It sounds too amusing to be scientific, but the demonstration is by no means unique in spiritualistic history. To mention only one instance, the great Lombroso recorded it with Eusapia Paladino. An overcoat was placed on a chair beyond the reach of the medium, whose hands and feet had been continuously controlled. Several objects from an inside pocket of the overcoat had been brought out and laid on a phosphorescent cardboard on the table. All at once the medium began to complain of something about her neck and binding her tight. On light being produced it was found that she had the overcoat on. her arms being slipped into it, one in each sleeve.

The intellectual side of all these buffooneries displayed conscious direction, intelligent planning by definite personalities. John King, alias Sir Henry Morgan, the buccaneer, was the chief of the invisible operations. He made his debut in 1850, in the home of father Davenport, a police official of Buffalo. Ira Davenport had been impelled to fire a pistol in the dark. At the instant of firing the pistol was taken from his hand and a human figure was seen holding it and smiling at the company. It was John King, a singularly gifted spirit. He managed a simultaneous levitation of Ira and William, the two brothers, and their sister Elizabeth. The Rev. J. B. Ferguson, the noted American preacher, who risked his ecclesiastical reputation on the Davenport Brothers in accompanying them and vouching for them before the British public, writes(1) on this point:

(1) T. L. Nichols, M.D.: "Supramundane Facts in the Life of Rev. Jesse Babcock Ferguson, A.M., LL.D.", London, 1865, p. 108.

"From as good testimony as I have of any fact that I can accept without personal knowledge, I believe that these young men have been raised into the air to the ceilings of rooms, and have been transported a distance of miles by the same force and intelligence, or intelligent force, that has for eleven years worked in their presence so many marvels."

John King stayed with the Davenport Brothers as an invisible manager throughout their career, and in difficult

situations often gave sound advice in the "direct" voice. This was no illusion. Says Rev. Ferguson:

"I have, in their presence, had articulate and audible conversation with a voice which was not theirs, nor that of any living person. With this I have conversed as a man talks with his friend, while the power or being from which the voice proceeded made its presence and reality known to me by other physical manifestations. In railway carriages, when in company with the Brothers Davenport and Mr. Fay, in passing through dark tunnels, I have been manipulated all over my body by hands seemingly human, sometimes unexpectedly at others at my request, when no one present could have touched me without my knowledge."

Besides Robert Cooper's testimony we have the record of James J. Mapes, Professor of Agricultural Chemistry of New York. He conversed with John King for half an hour. His hand was seized in a powerful grasp. When it was taken again the invisible hand increased in size and was covered with hair.

Hamilton, the successor of Robert Houdin, declared in a letter to the *Gazette des Etrangers* (September 27th, 1865), that the phenomena surpassed his expectations, and that they were inexplicable to him. Another famous magician, Prof. Jacobs, stated in a letter to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht* (April 20th, 1881), that the phenomena "were absolutely true and belong to the spiritual order of things in every respect".

As mediums, the Davenport Brothers were unique in several respects. In the Winter Palace in Russia, they held a seance before a thousand people in the presence of the Czar. Indeed, as many as two thousand were known to participate in England. They never asked for music. The phenomena were instantaneous. It is almost impossible to imagine that in a career of almost thirty years (William Davenport died in Sydney in 1877), their secret, if they had one, would not have been discovered. Houdini tried his best. In a letter to Conan Doyle(1), he writes:

"I was an intimate friend of Ira Erastus Davenport. I can make positive assertion that the Davenport Brothers were never exposed... I know more about the Davenport Brothers than anyone living."

(1) A. Conan Doyle: "The Edge of the Unknown", London, 1930.

It is a great pity that he did not make public all he knew.

Chapter 23: **Finger-Printing the Spirits of the Dead**

Story of Mrs. Margery Crandon

- Nandor Fodor -

THE GREAT Finger-print Mystery! The words spell a thrilling story. But not fiction this time. It is the most amazing true story of the century. It is the story of a woman who claims to finger-print the spirits of the dead.

The statement may rightly turn Bertillon in his grave. Scotland Yard opening a finger-print department in heaven is not a bad idea for a farce. But when it comes to a definite assertion that the dead can prove their survival by leaving fingerprints behind, the reader is forgiven for a violent start. He may not believe in survival at all. If he does, one thing seems pretty certain. The physical body dies. Even if the surviving ego knew something about the creases, sweat-pores and papillary ridges of his finger-tips, how could it reproduce them?

That is the question! How?

For it appears to be an established fact that through Mrs. Margery Crandon, of Boston, at least in one instance, a dead man claimed to prove his survival by impressing his "ectoplasmically" reborn digit into dental wax. His name was Charles Stanton Hill, a judge of the United States Court in Boston, a member of the Margery Circle. He died on September 2nd, 1930. Previous to his death a register was made of the finger-prints of all the sitters. During the sittings they were obtaining supernormal imprints in wax from "Walter", an entity which purported to be the deceased brother of Margery. And it occurred to them that by the same manifestation in the event of the death of a member of the circle, his survival could be proved.

Judge Hill was the first to go. Six weeks after his death he purported to communicate. While the medium's hands were held under strict control a phantom thumb was seen making three imprints. Mr. J. W. Fyfe, a Boston finger-print expert, examined the prints carefully. He found them perfectly identical with the prints made by Judge Hill during his life.

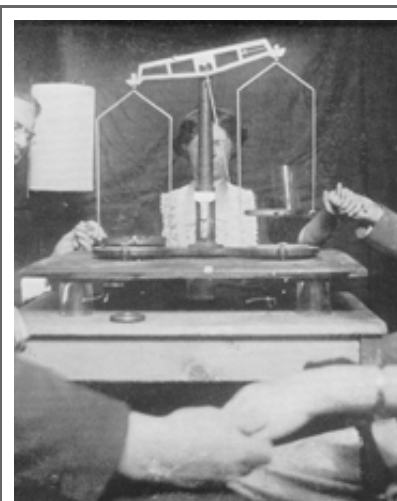
The facts have not been challenged. The evidence appeared to be perfect. But seance-room happenings are so strange and so much at variance with accepted scientific beliefs that no amount of proof could wake up the world to their significance.

Since 1926 Walter has been delivering hundreds of prints of his ghostly fingers. Among those who testified to the supernormal reception of these imprints was Dr. Robin J. Tillyard, Chief Entomologist to the Commonwealth of Australia. He obtained them in a solus sitting with Margery under conditions that could not be bettered. Moreover, from human fingers only negative imprints can be made. But Walter, the ghost, could produce, by twisting about in his hypothetical fourth dimension, positive, mirror negative and mirror positive imprints as well. He could also enlarge them so that they suggested a giant's thumb. His ingenuity in devising these experiments was simply inexhaustible.

On February 16th, 1932, in the presence of Mr. William H. Button, President of the American Society for Psychical Research, he made a thumb print inside a heavy locked box which could not be opened without the fact immediately becoming apparent. Before two scientists and a fingerprint expert he demonstrated the feat again and again.

That the prints were his own rested solely on Walter's testimony. On a razor, which he used in his lifetime, a partial finger-print was discovered. But it was not sufficient for identification.

Some time after the Hill incident it was discovered that a finger-print alone may not be foolproof evidence of the identity of a ghost. In July, 1931, Walter produced thumb-prints which he declared to be those of Sir



Super-physical suction cylinder, invisible and impalpable, photographed by fused quartz lens with Margery Crandon.

Oliver Lodge, who was, at the time, in England, 3,000 miles away. The prints were sent over to England. Mr. Bell, of Scotland Yard, subjected them to a thorough examination and pronounced them identical with the prints of Sir Oliver.

Nineteen such prints were delivered in Boston by Walter without Sir Oliver Lodge having the least idea how his finger-prints were "borrowed" by this ingenious ghost. No mould can be made from a two-dimensional finger-print. An expert would have little difficulty in recognizing a fingerprint made from a mould. If, then, the fingerprints of a living man could be "stolen" survival cannot be proved by finger-prints alone. So much less so as there was apparently no limit to Walter's versatility.

On March 9th, 1932, he made a print "of an infant not yet born but expected in a certain family". It was the imprint of a baby's foot. Walter gave the names of "Mary Jane" and "Mary and Jane". The baby was born, but, unhappily, family reasons made it impossible to obtain verification.

Soon after a bomb exploded, the tremors of which were registered throughout the psychic world.

Mr. E. E. Dudley, the major domo of the Crandon seances for years, announced that the Walter thumb-prints produced in dental wax were found to be identical with those of Dr. X. of Boston, the dentist of Margery. To back up this startling charge, he appealed to finger-print experts of both the Massachusetts State Police and of the Bureau of Criminal Identification of New York City. The experts agreed that the right thumbprints of Walter and the dentist, as submitted to them, were one and the same. The left thumb differed.

The inference which Mr. Dudley drew was that no two man's finger-prints are identical, therefore they are not Walter's. He did not question their supernormal delivery, though. He hardly could have done so, as he had been testifying to that fact for years. But as the investigation ordered by Mr. W. H. Button was drawing out over a long period, Dr. Walter Franklin Prince, the Director of the rival Society of Psychical Research in Boston, rushed into print with the charge that they had been produced by fraud.

The commitment seemed to be over-hasty when, end of 1933, the long-awaited report of the American Society for Psychical Research, with 300 photographic plates, has seen the light. It is a monument of patient and painstaking study. It was drawn up by Mr. Brackett K. Thorogood, former instructor in the mechanical engineering department of Harvard University, Director of the Franklin Union, and Research Consultant of the American Society for Psychical Research. He scrapped the work of many years and, beginning at the beginnings, he claims to have established without a shadow of doubt that:

1. There is no evidence of fraud, trickery, or the use of any normal mechanism in connection with the seance production of the Walter fingerprint phenomena.
2. These Walter phenomena are definitely proved by the evidence to be supernormal.
3. Neither of the Walter hands as a whole nor as to any of the component parts is identical with that of any known person or persons.

The photographs which accompany the report are most impressive. The medium is shown with both hands held while another hand issues from her body around her waist. It was a living human hand, for it gave a vigorous handshake to Dr. Richardson. Instead of fingers, as before, it made impressions, in huge slabs of dental wax, of the whole palm and fingers, so that it was possible to co-ordinate all the prints which were previously obtained. The authenticity of the left thumbprint could not be questioned because of a definite scar cutting across the thumb at an angle of 30 degrees with the joint line. This scar Walter claimed to have received as a boy while whittling. Of the right thumb-prints micro-photographs are in existence showing the differences of structure between the delta of Walter's right thumb and the delta of Dr. X's right thumb.

Except by accusing people of renown and reputation of the greatest and most brazen fraud of the century, it is hardly possible to get away from the fact that the mediumship of Margery has withstood the most rigorous tests that scientific ingenuity could devise.

Incidentally, such an accusation is implied in the answer of the Boston S.P.R. (Bulletin XXII), but the rejoinder, last August, of the American S.P.R. claims crushing counter evidence, little hope being held out for ever achieving general acceptance of the particular facts over which psychical researchers themselves

are in passionate disagreement.

Yet the Great Finger-print Mystery is but a sidelight of Margery Crandon's amazing personality. First, she is not a professional medium. She is the wife of Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, who was Professor of Surgery at the Harvard Medical School for sixteen years, and is the author of a standard textbook on surgical after-treatment. Mediumship came to her in experiments undertaken at home partly as a joke, partly out of curiosity. The phenomena which developed were beyond the power and control of the sitters. They brought them proof of human survival and filled them with missionary zeal to prove the same to an abusive and obdurate world of science. As an epic of human heroism little can rival their twelve years' history. The scientists usually quarrelled with each other before they could reach a verdict. But many of them discovered the horizons of a new world with immense vistas of knowledge. None of them has ever brought forward the slightest proof against the Crandons' integrity.

To-day, as a result of instrumental testing, stupendous facts are hammering at the doors of science. It has been proved as well as science is capable of proving anything in the world that the "direct voice" of Spiritualism is no myth, no delusion of fevered imagination. B. K. Thorogood constructed a cubical box consisting of layers of seven different materials, sheathed in copper and soft iron, weighing over a hundred pounds, completely sound-proof, closed and padlocked, containing a large, very sensitive microphone which was connected by two wires emerging from the box to a loudspeaker in a distant room. The voice in space which Walter claimed to be his own was asked to speak into the microphone within the box. He agreed. While the sitters in the seance-room heard nothing the voice of Walter issued from the loudspeaker in another room, proving that it had its origin through the microphone in the box.

This was a conclusive and final proof of the independence of Walter's voice from Margery's.

The voice is full, resonant and masculine; it approximates in range, quality and volume an ordinary human voice. It talks intelligently, shows a great sense of humour, answers questions and carries on argument and conversation in a way that any clever mortal would. The personality of Walter is just as human as that of the sitters. He claims to manifest through the forces provided by the organism of his sister, Margery. He shows no pretence of saintliness and, on occasions, swears and curses in justified indignation. He caught Houdini, at the time of the investigation arranged by the Scientific American in 1923, in "framing up" Margery for purposes of Press sensationalism. He used the most fearful and unprintable language that ever issued from the Great Beyond. It sent Houdini cowering and almost weeping in protest(1).

(1) Malcolm Bird: "Margery, the Medium", London, 1925.

Walter never pretends to know what he can do, but is always ready to try and learn himself.

"I don't give a damn about convincing the public or anyone," he said more than once. "My crowd came here because we liked you people, and you kept us here working at this damn thing."

A few months ago his voice was broadcast from a Boston studio from a gramophone record which was made in the séance-room. It began:

"This is the voice of Walter speaking."

There followed a hodge-podge of whistling, of amiable nonsense and of threadbare homilies in verse and prose. He parodied Longfellow's poem in this manner:

*"Lives of great men all remind us
That we all can be a bore,
So I'll can this deathly chatter
And I'll whistle something more."*

Then he went on in earnest:

"My friends, I come to you at the request of some of our group to let you hear the sound of a dead man's voice. Years ago, the agency through which I speak would have been thought of as the works of the devil. The Medium would have been burned. You are progressing.

Remember the first chapter of Jeremiah, 19th verse: 'And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee!'

"Many of our sitters have criticized the fact that we from the other side do not bring you facts more necessary to your lives. As a matter of fact, you know all things that (pause) that you ought to know - things to make life better and bigger. The simplest things of life are best - love, honour, all the things that go to unite mankind."

The proofs of Walter's supernormal power are so varied that it is difficult to choose from a great number of startling demonstrations. He claimed that he has superphysical instruments to achieve his ends. In one of the scale experiments of the Scientific American Committee a curious, semitransparent cylinder was photographed with a quartz lens, which is sensitive to the ultra-violet end of the spectrum, when nothing was visible to normal eyesight. It was registered on seven out of twelve exposed plates. The pan that carried it was up. The deduction was that the cylinder is a sort of suction pump to keep the lighter pan up. So Walter's claim forced itself on scientific consideration.

On March 17th, 1928, in red light and with closed eyes Margery began to write in Chinese. She does not know Chinese, nor did the sitters. The purpose, as Walter explained, was to demonstrate that minds other than the sitters and the medium are at work. Walter announced an experiment in "cross-correspondence" with Dr. Henry Hardwicke, a medium of Niagara Falls, a distance of 450 miles from Boston. He asked Malcolm Bird, then Research Officer of the American Society for Psychical Research, to pick out a sentence which should be given in Chinese through Hardwicke. Malcolm Bird chose: "A rolling stone gathers no moss. Hardly was the sitting over when a telegram arrived from Niagara Falls. A few days later it was followed by the original witnessed copy of Dr. Hardwicke's script. It showed a Maltese cross within the circle, a rectangle enclosing the name Kung-fu-tze, the symbols for Bird and Hill, and the Chinese sentence, the general meaning of which is: "A travelling agitator gathers no gold." A further analysis revealed on the left-hand column the words in Chinese: "I am not dead, Confucius." The duplicate of this is in the right-hand column of the Margery script.

These cross-correspondence experiments were repeated through other mediums who knew not a word of Chinese.

Do they leave any avenue of escape from the conclusion that, as claimed, intelligences out of flesh have been devising them? To say that there is another solution is to set up the greatest puzzle which men have ever been called to unravel.

Chapter 24: Tested by Infra-Red Photography Story of Rudi Schneider

- Nandor Fodor -

WITH CERTAIN peculiar people certain phenomena are claimed to occur in the dark. Asked to test them, we will want to be assured that (1) there is no accomplice in the room, (2) no physical or chemical instruments are introduced, (3) the medium is prevented from normally producing the results.

For a roomful of intelligent people united in distrust of the medium it should be child's play to provide against the first two possibilities. As regards the third, the methods of immobilizing the medium may greatly vary. Roughly speaking, the control might be instrumental or tactual. The first is effective but often too complicated. The second is always open to suspicion. "After three months' practice and meditation one can arrive at the certainty of holding well a human hand," was the sarcastic remark of Professor Charles Richet, the famous physiologist of the Sorbonne to those who criticized his experiments with Eusapia Paladino. As a last resort some people will prefer to believe that control was relaxed than to admit something which defies science.

A way out from the apparent impasse was found by the introduction into the seance-room of infrared ray photography. It marked the beginning of a new epoch in psychical research. The developments which led to it unfold a story of absorbing interest.

It all goes back to Braunau, a little town in Austria where out of the six sons of a linotype compositor, named Schneider, two were discovered to be decidedly queer; not abnormal, but queer. Willi, who was born in 1903, "went off" periodically. He fell into a trance. His personality altered and claimed to be somebody else; a rather unusual somebody, a girl, calling herself Lola Montez, one-time mistress of Ludwig I, the blind king of Bavaria. One night, amidst rather dramatic circumstances, she transferred her attention to Willi's younger brother, who was then 11 years of age. She complained that there was not enough "power" for moving objects and showing strange shapes suggesting human limbs and faces. She wanted Rudi. The parents objected. Rudi was too young and he was asleep. "Olga" did not answer. But a few minutes later the door opened and Rudi, in deep trance, entered and joined the circle.

After this incident he showed a rapid development of the same powers which Willi possessed. Soon he eclipsed his brother. That in itself was no mean achievement, for Willi, whose mediumistic education was taken up by Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, a German doctor of considerable renown, proved to be a remarkable lad. In Munich, between December 3rd, 1921, and July 1st, 1922, under very strict test conditions, a round hundred scientists witnessed an array of phenomena for which there was no normal explanation. The room was searched each time, Willi was examined by specialists, his seance robe was fitted up with luminous straps, he was held hand and foot, and he was cut off by a gauze screen from the objects which he claimed to be able to move. He did move them. They acted as if they came to life. Sometimes a nebulous shape in the form of a hand appeared to handle them. For the first time in the history of mediumistic research a hundred scientists affixed their signature to a statement that they were completely convinced of the reality of "telekinesis" (movement of objects without contact) and of the "ectoplasmic" order of phenomena.

The English world first turned its attention to these results after Mr. Harry Price, then Director of the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, London, and Dr. Eric J. Dingwall, then Research Officer of the Society for Psychical Research attended some sittings in Munich in 1922. Both of them signed a statement that they witnessed genuine phenomena. In consequence, two years later Willi was invited to London to sit at the premises of the Society for Psychical Research. After a desperate attempt to get away from the facts observed, Dr. Dingwall reluctantly admitted that "the only reasonable hypothesis which covers the facts is that some supernormal agency produced the results".

Soon after, the curtain rung down on Willi Schneider. His powers vanished as incomprehensibly as they came. His mantle fell on Rudi. He was five years Willi's junior. With all the stamina of youth he stood, for a period of nearly ten years, the concentrated attacks of bitterly sceptical scientists and - won. The theories of explanation, the charges of fraud, so many attempts to save science from an admission of bankruptcy, all

that is now of merely historical interest. For if by infra-red photography Rudi Schneider could prove in October, 1930, as he did, that the much-disputed phenomena were genuine, obviously he could not have been much wrong in the past.

But even before this crucial period arrived, in 1929 at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research in London, under the most merciless triple control devised up to the date, Rudi Schneider impressed with the reality of supernormal powers such eminent men as Lord Rayleigh, Prof. A. O. Rankine, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, Dr. William Brown, Prof. Nils von Hofsten, Prof. A. F. C. Pollard, Mr. C. E. M. Joad, Mr. A. Egerton, Prof. A. M. Low, Dr. David Efron, Dr. Eugen Osty, and Dr. Jeans.

"I am convinced that what I saw at the séance was not trickery. No group of my fellow-magicians could have produced these effects under such conditions.," wrote Will Goldston in the *Sunday Graphic*, after a séance. Further, the founder of the Magician's Club writes in his *Secrets of Famous Illusionists*:

"I persuaded him (Rudi Schneider) to let me show him a few sleight-of-hand tricks. He knew nothing of the principle of mis-direction, for he followed my movements with the eyes of a child."

From the phenomena themselves there was no possible escape. Of course they did not and could not prove the reality of "Olga". That remained a mystery.

"After many séances and 'confidential talks' with her," writes Harry Price, "I am completely at a loss to know whether she is really a figment of Rudi's subconscious mind or actually a discarnate entity."

Rudi himself emerged with such success from the ordeals which science imposed upon him that Mr. Harry Price presented him with a certificate and had no hesitation in stating(1):

(1) Harry Price: "Rudi Schneider, a Scientific Examination of his Mediumship", London, 1930.

"If Rudi were to be exposed a hundred times in the future it would not invalidate or effect to the slightest degree our considered judgment that the boy has produced genuine abnormal phenomena while he has been at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research."

In view of later developments special importance is to be attached to this unequivocal statement.

In October and November, 1930, Rudi outdid his London achievements at the Institut Metapsychique International in Paris. For the first time in the history of mediumship infra-red ray photography was employed to detect the presence of the hypothetical invisible force in the dark. According to Dr. Osty's report, in the fourteenth séance, infra-red photography revealed, at a distance from the medium, the existence of an invisible substance, localized in space but rigorously commanded by the psychical organism of the medium. Sound-registering and recording instruments signalled the movements of this invisible substance. No screens and meshes of various materials, nor electrically charged plates, could intercept it. An increase in red light, a change in the conditions of the room or of the position of the medium, however, always sensibly diminished the action of the substance.

Significantly, all these infra-red experiments were successfully duplicated in the spring of 1932, when Rudi sat again at the National Laboratory of Psychical Research. A number of distinguished scientists became convinced of the reality of the phenomena. The uproar which followed it a year later was totally unexpected. Mr. Harry Price suddenly published an automatic photograph taken in the 25th sitting which revealed an arm free behind Rudi when he was supposed to have been controlled by Mr. Price himself. "It will be necessary for previous investigators to revise their findings," Mr. Price concluded(1). As he never revised his own previous findings, the statement was obviously directed against Dr. Osty's conclusions. The result was rather unexpected. The Council of his own Laboratory rose against Mr. Price. Several members resigned in protest, accusing him of incompetence as a controller and unfairness towards his fellow-investigators whom he failed to enlighten of his discovery.

(1) Harry Price: "An Account of Some Further Experiments with Rudi Schneider", 1933.

Rudi Schneider might have seriously suffered in reputation had it not been for a series of successful sittings which, prior to Mr. Price's bombshell, he gave in London to a research group associated with Lord Charles Hope.

"The results obtained go far to support the claims put forward by Dr. Osty in his report," concluded Lord Charles Hope.

Miracule dictu, even Mr. Theodore Besterman, Investigating Officer of the Society for Psychical Research, who was, up to the time, the bitterest opponent of the reality of physical phenomena, rallied to Rudi's defence by saying that "Mr. Price's report appears to me to be in itself quite worthless as an exposure. It can have no effect on Rudi Schneider's standing."(1)

(1) Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, Vol. XLI.

Admittedly, of late years Rudi's phenomena lost in strength. But sufficient has been left to amaze and dumbfound orthodox science. Professor D. S. Fraser-Harris attended 37 of the Lord Charles Hope sittings. In a lecture before the Survival League at Caxton Hall, London, in the autumn Of 1933, he spoke of puzzling luminous phenomena, a selfluminous fog billowing in front of the curtain and on the top of the table, of inexplicable intelligent movement of objects, of strange breezes from nowhere, of Rudi's abnormal rate of breathing, and continued, stating:

"The only phantom I observed and am never likely to forget was a small rod-like shape, on March 29th, 1932. My palm was extended. Out of the darkness there came, or rather began to form, near my palm, an elongated homogeneous structure, not anatomical, looking like a ruler but more like condensed smoke. It slowly approached my thumb. Before reaching it, the palm of my hand became intensely cold as if a lump of ice had been placed there. The cold went through to the back of my hand, then it went up to the elbow and stopped. The rod came and pressed against my thumb for 5 or 6 seconds - long enough for me to say that it was cool, moist and elastic. It was like gutta-percha. The visible length of the rod was about 18 inches."

The professor's conclusion based on his own observation and on the records of the infra-red experiments was that:

"We seem to be on the threshold of the discovery of a force entirely unknown to the physicists of to-day."

Although this statement, than which nothing more startling can be expected from a scientist, received no confirmation from the Society for Psychical Research (where an attempt was made to obtain infra-red cinematographic pictures of the operation of this force which Rudi emits, but which at that period had appeared to lapse), it still seems as if eighty years of spiritualist clamour had not been in vain. Spiritualists were not such deluded fools as they were suspected to be. Behind mediumship there is something very big. Had science been more tolerant in the last sixty years since Sir William Crookes announced his momentous findings to the world, who knows what revolutionary discoveries might not have been made many, many years ago!

Chapter 25: The Spirit which made a "Talkie" Story Of Mrs. Meurig Morris

- Nandor Fodor -

CONFESSIONS OF famous writers disclose a fact which has not yet been sufficiently marvelled at. It is that creative inspiration, in many cases, only differs from mediumistic trance in degree and not in kind.

To Harriet Beecher Stowe when she wrote the chapter on *The Death of Uncle Tom*, it seemed "as though what she wrote was blown through her mind as with the rushing of a mighty wind".

W. M. Thackeray admitted in one of his Roundabout papers (*Cornhill Magazine*, August, 1862):

"I have been surprised at the observations made by some of my characters. It seems as if an occult power was moving the pen. The personage does or says something, and I ask: 'How did he come to think of that?'"

Such confessions could be easily multiplied. They point to a profound mystery. Psychologists will seek the key in the subconscious mind, writers in a mental world, spiritualists in the world of spirits. Between the last two there are no walls of division. Mrs. Hester Dowden's *Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde* would have been acclaimed as a literary sensation had it been based on her natural talents. Instead of the flotsam and jetsam of a mental world which attach themselves to "affinitive souls", as Edgar Wallace put it, she ascribed her book to the direct influence of the spirit of Oscar Wilde.

In the case of automatic writing concealment would be comparatively easy. In the case of trance oratory, almost impossible. Oratory demands the limelight. The speaker's marked change of personality and mannerism is an eloquent sign of something out of the ordinary. But while an ordinary orator is freely granted all the credit for his rhetorical achievement a trance speaker is invariably suspected of duplicity and stunting. Nor can that be wondered at. The claim that a discarnate entity is using an alien organism to speak to the people of the earth is too stupendous and bewildering. But science cannot persistently ignore phenomena.

Why does Mrs. L. A. Meurig Morris, one of the greatest woman orators of to-day, appear to be possessed by a totally different personality? Why does her soprano change into a ringing baritone? Why does she assume a masculine and priestly mannerism? Where is the source of the erudition and grasp of philosophy which she displays, which is far above her intellectual capacities? Why does she in trance persistently claim to be a messenger spirit, a discarnate missionary teaching the mysteries of life and death to the world?

Tentative suggestions are easy to exhaust. She might be simulating. She might be in a secondary state of dissociated personality. She might be in hypnotic trance. Lastly, her claim might be true.

You cannot simulate knowledge which you do not possess. Neither secondary nor hypnotic personalities can give an exhibition of amazing erudition if such has not been consciously acquired.

Mrs. Meurig Morris is a charming but extremely simple West-country woman. She had a limited education. Reliance on her own intellectual powers on the platform would not give her the ghost of a chance. She has a sterling character for which prominent people are ready to vouch. She would have to be a great actress to portray the distress of her entrancement and her coming to, to keep up that sustained change of voice, to display all the tricks and bodily movements of an accomplished ecclesiastical orator. But she knows nothing of acting. Nor would it help her if she did. For the first doctor that happened to come along would expose her in five minutes.

Trance cannot be simulated. Both the hypnotic and mediumistic trance have marked characteristics. And they differ essentially. The hypnotic subject would do whatever the hypnotizer suggests. In the mediumistic trance suggestion does not work. The personalities which manifest do not obey your wish. In variety they far surpass the imitative efforts of hypnotic subjects. Were they subjective creations of the medium's mind they

would not exhibit those special peculiarities by which the sitters establish their identity with their departed friends. The hypnotic self is sincere. It never shows such diabolic cunning as the personation of hundreds of individuals and the acquisition of facts deep below in the subconscious or totally unknown to the sitter would involve. Moreover, the hypnotic personality has an uncanny sense of time. The mediumistic personalities, on the other hand, are vague and uncertain on this point. Many mediums are not hypnotizable at all. Those who are exhibit, in the hypnotic sleep, faculties of more transcendental character than the ordinary subjects. In the case of Mrs. Meurig Morris, from the platform the public only hears one personality: "Power". Who he is, no one knows. He never revealed his identity. It is the teaching and not the teacher which counts. His desire is to remain impersonal. There are rumours that he claimed to be Caiaphas, the high priest of the Temple of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus. They have been vigorously denied. There were whisperings that he could not come but in the presence of Mr. Lawrence Cowen, the well-known author and playwright, who has the powers of a Svengali over Mrs. Morris. Nothing could be more nonsensical. The case of Mr. Lawrence Cowen is an example of religious conversion. If anything was totally absent from his eventful and stormy life it was faith and religion. He was a jeering, sneering agnostic until by accident he crossed the path of Mrs. Meurig Morris. "Power" converted him. Out of the terrific spiritual upheaval which followed he emerged as a missionary. He organized regular Sunday services (first at the Fortune Theatre, then at Aeolian Hall, Bond Street, London) for "Power", and arranged tours all over the country. He spent a fortune on religious propaganda without the slightest hope of any return or attempt at personal aggrandizement. "Power" comes whether he is there or not. And so overwhelming is his personality that people learn to approach him in a spirit of reverence. Sir Oliver Lodge had met him, and from the conversation on the immediate future of humanity the great scientist emerged with tears in his eyes.

"Power's" foreknowledge might be disbelieved, but the wisdom with which he lays his plans is evident. The strange incident which occurred at the British Movietone Company when a talking film was made of "Power's" oratory was declared by him a well-thought-out demonstration.

The microphones were seen by seventy people high up in the air held up by new half-inch ropes.

A rope suddenly snapped and a terrific crash startled all present. Within half an inch of Mrs. Morris' face the microphone swept across the space and went swaying to and fro. A foreman rushed up and dragged the rope aside to keep it out of the sight of the camera. The cameraman never stopped. Nor did Mrs. Morris. In spite of the obvious danger to her life she never stirred and went on undisturbed with her trance speech. According to expert opinion the voice registering must have been a failure. Yet it was found that the accident had not the least influence. The record was perfect. According to "Power" the rope was supernaturally severed so as to prove, by the medium's demeanour, that she was indeed in trance, as no human being could have consciously exhibited such self-possession as she did when the accident occurred.

A still more amazing incident, a veritable technical miracle occurred at the Columbia Gramophone Company's studio in the course of recording "Power's" voice. According to C. W. Nixon's (of the Columbia Gramophone Company) publicly rendered account, an incident occurred at the very commencement of the operation which, by all the rules, should have spoiled the first side of the record. Mr. Ernest Oaten, President of the International Spiritualist Federation, was in the chair, and being unaware that the start was to be made without the appearance of the usual red light, he told Mrs. Morris as she stood up: "Wait for the signal." These words were picked up by the microphone and were heard by the engineers in the recording-room after the apparatus had been started. It was believed that they must be on the record.

Later, when the second side of the record was to be made, there was confusion in starting. Toward the end, as if to make technical failure a certainty, Mrs. Morris turned and walked several paces away from the microphone.

A week before the record was ready for reproduction Cowen rang up Nixon and told him that "Power" asserts that notwithstanding the technical mistakes the record would be a success, that Mr. Oaten's words would not be reproduced and that the timing and volume of the voice would not be spoiled by the later accidents. This statement was so extraordinary and appeared to be so preposterous that Nixon had it taken down word by word, and sent it in a sealed envelope to Mr. Oaten in Manchester with the request that he would keep it unopened until the record was ready and the truth or otherwise of the prediction could be tested. The record was played in the Fortune Theatre on April 25th, 1931. It was perfect. The letter was opened. The prediction was found to be true in every detail.

I heard "Power" on many occasions. Once I have been sitting close to Mrs. Morris on the stage. I was struck by seeing her eye muscles in continual play while her eyes were shut. You cannot move your eyeballs without contracting and dilating the pupil. I wondered what did it mean. Could "Power" see through the closed eyelids, so keeping up with the audience that magnetic touch with which no great orator dispenses? A paleontologist is able to reconstruct an extinct animal from a single bone. I wondered if from a close study of Mrs. Morris' mannerisms, but mostly from the remarkable play of her facial muscles, the general movements of her body and the distention of her lungs a physiognomist or a physiologist could not draw some definite conclusions as to the physical appearance that they suggested "Power" to have had.

Mentally, Mrs. Morris appears to reap a harvest from "Power's" visitations. Though she cannot remember the subject or substance of "Power's" address when she comes out of trance, she receives unconscious education. In ordinary conversation, as she admitted to me some time ago. she may find herself uttering answers which she could not consciously think of and which apparently proceeded from the subconscious stratum of her mind. "Power," in fact, is foreseeing the day when it will not be necessary to entrance her for public speaking. He says that when the bridge between the physical and the higher mind would be made, as it eventually would, all the knowledge which was uttered through her would become accessible to her. He ("Power") would then become able to use her in a perfectly normal way.

If this stage will be reached "Power" will have an added difficulty in convincing people of his independent existence. His missionary efforts will stand out even then undoubted. Why should they be thrust upon an unheeding world?

The question is deeply bound up with the fundamentals of Spiritualism. There is a living force in the spiritualist movement which fills its workers with apostolic zeal. They claim more than a belief in the teachings of the Nazarene. They claim to *know* their truth. They take it as a sacred duty to convince the world of their practical demonstrability. This mighty urge has never been sufficiently dwelt upon by the critics of Spiritualism. Yet this is the sole secret of its growth and spread. Money there is none in it, only labour and sacrifice. No fortune is made by famous mediums, just a bare living. And if the best speakers, who have made a special study of their subject for years, average £1 per lecture, they do quite well. The thing is not done for personal gain. It is done for a Movement which, they fervently hope, will conquer the world and make it a better place to live in.